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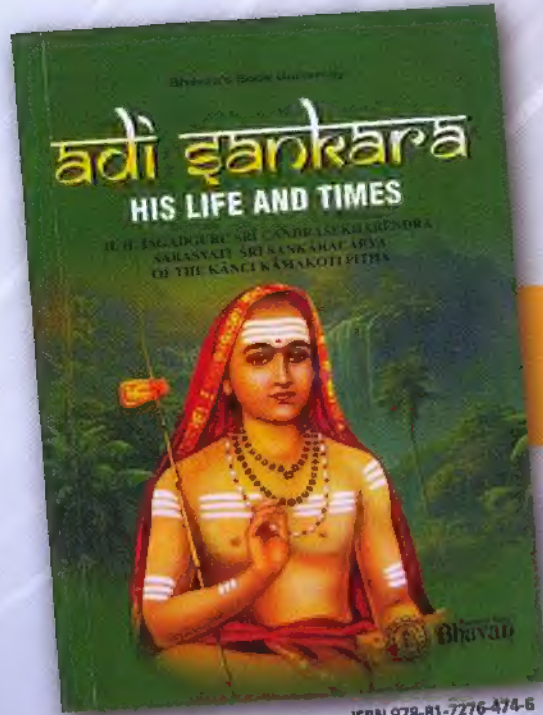
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HIS LIFE AND TIMES

H. H. Jagadguru Śrī Candraśekharendra Sarasvati,
Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of the Kāñci Kāmakoṭi Pīṭha

Translated into English
by T.M.P. Mahadevan



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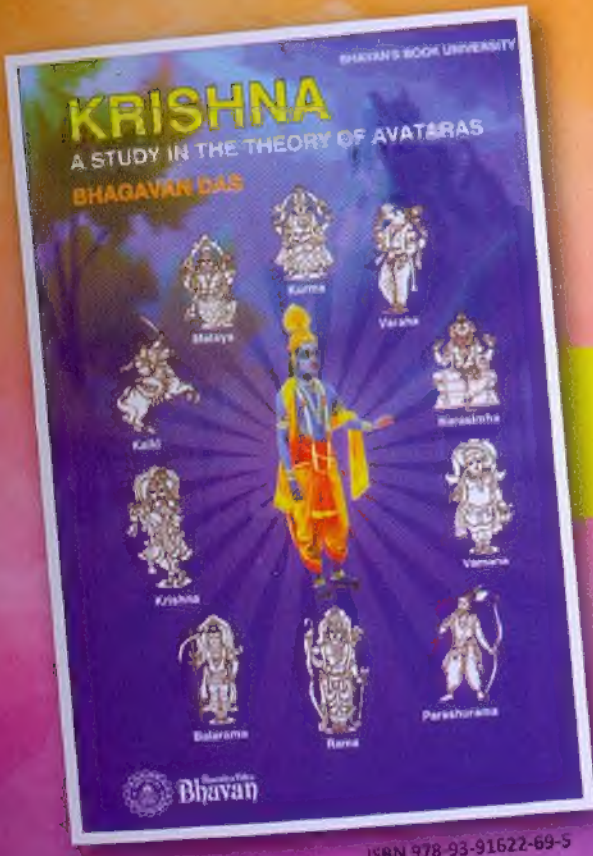
English Fortnightly



KRISHNA

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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

aa no bhadraah kratavo yantu vishvatah

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side -Rigveda, 1-89-1



SAGE SPEAK



दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥

He whose mind is unperturbed amid calamities, whose longing for pleasures has departed, who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage, a man of steady wisdom.



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The Pavement Bookstalls of Mumbai

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FLASH BACK

India Must Reassert Herself

Sri Aurobindo

Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa are the essence of the history of ancient India; if all else were lost, they would still be its sole and sufficient cultural history.

Their poems are types and exponents of three periods in the development of the human soul, types, and exponents also of the three great powers which dispute and clash in the imperfect and half-formed temperament and harmonise in the formed and perfect.

At the same time, their works are pictures, at once minute and grandiose of three moods of our Aryan civilisation, of which the



first was predominatingly moral; the second, predominatingly intellectual, and the third, predominatingly material.

The fourth power of the soul, the spiritual, which can alone govern and harmonise the others by fusion with them, had not,

though it pervaded and powerfully influenced each successive development, any separate age of predominance, did not like the others possess the whole race with a dominating obsession.

It was the supreme misfortune of India that before she was able to complete the round of her experience and gather up the fruit of her long millenniums of search and travail by commencing a fourth and more perfect age in which moral, intellectual and material development should be all equally harmonised and all spiritualised, the inrush of barbarians broke in finally on her endless solitary *tapasya* of effort and beat her national life into fragments.

A preparation for such an age may be glimpsed in the new tendencies of spiritual seeking that began with Shankara and continued in later Vaishnavism and Shaivism and in new turns of poetry and art, but it found no opportunity of seizing on the total life of the nation and throwing it into another mould. The work was interrupted before it had well begun; and India was left with only the remnants of the culture of the material age to piece out her existence.

Yet, even the little that was done afterwards, proved to be much; for it saved her from gradually petrifying and perishing as almost all the old civilisations of Assyria, Egypt, Greece, Rome, petrified and perished, as the material civilisation, of Europe, unless spiritualised, must before long petrify and perish.

That there is still an unexhausted vitality in her, that she yet nourishes the seeds of re-birth and renewal, we owe to Shankara and his successors and the great minds and souls that came after them.

Will she yet arise, now combine her past and continue the great dream where she left it off, shaking off on the one hand the soils and the filth that have grown on her in her period of downfall and futile struggle, and reasserting on the other, her peculiar individuality and national type against the callow civilisation of the West with its dogmatic and intolerant knowledge, its still more dogmatic and intolerant ignorance, its deification of selfishness and force, its violence and its ungoverned Titanism?

In doing so lies her one chance of salvation.

[Courtesy: Aurobindo Ashram]



Kulapativani

Materialism

Every individual in every country, whatever his political colour or religious faith, who is a prey to materialism, in the shape of power, wealth or ambition, detached from a humble approach to God, is a potential recruit and is being organised by its fanatic crusaders into an 'unsacred' host.



Point to Ponder

Self-Discipline

A good life is impossible without self-discipline.

First of all, it can be said that self-discipline is for the adults and for the mature although not all adults are mature, nor all youngsters immature. For a person's physical age is not necessarily a reflection of his or her mental age.

It is generally true that children are under the custody of adults. Criminals are restrained by authority and the deranged are confined in institutions because

of their lack of capacity for self-discipline. All adults as free men do not necessarily exercise self-discipline.

One can also observe that animals, which live by instinct, do not possess the capacity of self-discipline. Indeed, this is a unique human trait. Yet, not all human beings are interested in exercising and developing this trait.

Self-discipline may be grouped into two major categories. One is the self-discipline of a skill and

the other is the self-discipline of the person himself. The former is about a technique which one masters through self-discipline. The latter is the mastery of oneself through self-discipline.

The difference between the two is not merely a matter of degree but a matter of kind.

The first category of self-discipline is about the acquiring of a skill such as singing, acting, engineering, managing, writing, dancing or playing. To be proficient in any of these areas, one must exercise considerable self-discipline. The amount of self-discipline that is required to be a competent pianist or ballet dancer stretches one's imagination.

Indeed, to be truly good in anything, self-discipline is absolutely indispensable.

In the academic world, the word 'discipline' is synonymous with a particular field of study. Yet, after all is said and done, the first category of self-discipline is only about acquiring a particular skill or ability of one kind or another. This may be referred to as technical self-discipline.

A man who is good at a specific skill is not necessarily a



good man. So, to learn to be a good man requires another kind of self-discipline. (This is different from the first category where perfection of skill is the sole concern.)

The second type of self-discipline is even more difficult and demanding than the first one. For such discipline involves not only a part of oneself but all of oneself and not only a certain part of a day or a week but all of the working hours of a man's life.

This is the discipline of the soul rather than that of the body. This may be called moral self-discipline.

Landlord and Tenant

M. K. Gandhi

The *kisan* is the salt of the earth which rightly belongs or should belong to him, not to the absentee landlord or *zamindar*.

Land and all property is his who will work for it. Unfortunately, the workers are or have been kept ignorant of this simple fact.

I believe that the land you cultivate should belong to you, but it cannot be your own all at once, you cannot force it from the *zamindars*. Non-violence is the only way; consciousness of your own power is the only way.

No man should have more land than he needs for dignified sustenance. Who can dispute the fact that the grinding poverty of the masses is due to their having no land that they can call their own?

But it must be realised that the reform cannot be rushed. If it is to be brought about by non-violent means, it can only be done by education, both of the haves and the have-nots. The former should be assured that there never will be force used against them. The have-nots must be educated to know that no one can really compel them to do anything

against their will, and that they can secure their freedom by learning the art of non-violence, i.e., self-suffering.

I would tell you that ownership of your land belongs as much to the ryots as to you.

My objective is to reach your heart and convert you so that you may hold all your private property in trust for your tenants and use it primarily for their welfare. I am aware of the fact that within the ranks of the Congress, a new party called the Socialist party is coming into being, and I cannot say what would happen if that party succeeds in carrying the Congress with it. But I am quite clear that if strictly honest and unchallengeable referendum of our millions were to be taken, they would not vote for the wholesale expropriation of the propertied classes. I am working for the co-operation and co-ordination of capital and labour, of landlord and tenant.

But I must utter a note of warning. I have always told mill-owners that they are not exclusive owners of mills and workmen are equal shares in ownership. In the same way, I would tell you that ownership of your land

belongs as much to the ryots as to you, and you may not squander your gains in luxurious or extravagant living, but must use them for the well-being of ryots. Once you make your ryots experience a sense of kinship with you and a sense of security that their interests as members of a family will never suffer at your hands, you may be sure that there cannot be a clash between you and them and no class war.

The *zamindars* would do well to take time by the forelock. Let them cease to be mere rent collectors. They should become trustees and trusted friends of their tenants. They should limit their privy purse. Let them forgo



the questionable perquisites they take from the tenants in the shape of forced gifts of marriage and other occasions, or *nazarana* on transfer of holdings from one *kisan* to another or on restoration to the same *kisan* after eviction for non-payment of rent. They should give them fixity of tenure, take a lively interest in their welfare, provide well-managed schools for adults, and hospitals and dispensaries for the sick, look after the sanitation of villages and in a variety of ways make them feel that they, the *zamindars*, are their true friends taking only a fixed commission for their manifold services. In short, they must justify their position... *kisans* should scrupulously fulfil their obligations to the *zamindars*. I mean not necessarily the statutory, but the obligations which they have themselves admitted to be just. They must reject the doctrine that their holdings are absolutely theirs to the exclusion of the *zamindars*. They are or should be members of a joint family in which the *zamindar* is the head guarding their right against encroachment. Whatever the law may be, the *zamindari* to be defensible must approach the conditions of a joint family.

I like the ideal of Rama and Janaka. They owned nothing against the people. Everything including themselves belonged to the people. They lived in their midst a life not above theirs, but in correspondence with theirs. But these may not be regarded as historical personages. Then let us take the example of the great Caliph Omar. Though he was monarch of a vast realm created by his great genius and amazing industry, he lived the life of a pauper and never considered himself owner of the vast treasures that lay at his feet. He was a terror to those officials who squandered people's money in luxuries.

To the landlords I say that if what is said against them is true, I would warn them that their days are numbered. They could no longer continue as lords and masters. They have a bright future if they become the trustees of the poor *kisans*. I have in mind not trustees in name but in reality. Such trustees would take nothing for themselves that their labour and care did not entitle them to. Then they would find that no law would be able to touch them. The *kisans* would be their friends. ●



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Role of Samkhya Yoga in Value-Based Education

Dr. Pushpa Neelkantan

Some say, "The world is unreal, without a foundation and a moral base. It is born of lust. That's all they think of and they are subject to innumerable anxieties because they are bound in by hundreds of desires, given to lust and anger and strive to get power from the objects of senses." (The Gita on demonic qualities.)

One is therefore a prey to finite thinking and sees only external appearances. *Samkhya Karika* 48 calls it *tamah*, *mahamoha*, and *hatamisa* or delusion, extreme delusion or blinding gloom. In Patanjali yoga, it is called *avidya*, the breeding ground of many forms

of it. We are unaware of the suffering encased in this ignorance and lack the awareness of those tools and practices which can help us to overcome it.

The emerging trends in the field of education is interdisciplinary dialogue. It can promote newer ways of teaching and learning. The learning outcome, knowledge, skills and competencies in value education through Samkhya yoga philosophy has to be reviewed.

The concept of the *Gun*as has attracted the attention of educationists. The study of *Gun*as, especially its varying potentials in a mutual and co-operative manner,

affects attitudinal changes in a positive way. The theories and models to develop one's personality that are inherent in the study of the *Gun*as and the *Sattva buddhi* will provide the scope for application.

In reality, the resourceful *Gun*as (*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) continuously interact in varying proportions. This can serve as the norms of evolution and the scale of measuring the first person perspective, in one's attitude and disposition.

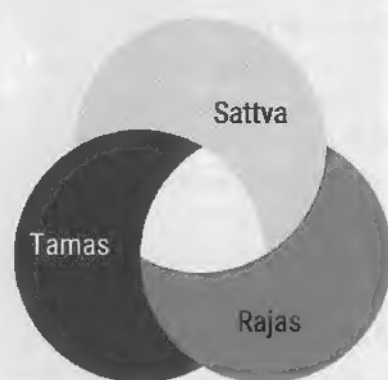
The Samkhya philosophy has assigned a high place for growth and evolution. It has inherent potentiality and provides the necessary tools for self-growth. The term used is *Adhyavasaya buddhi* or *Sattvika buddhi* in Ishvara Krishna's *Samkhya Karika* 23. It means to ascertain, to determine, to discern or to discriminate.

The *buddhi tattva* contains the scope for this value-based learning. This *karika* 23 states that *Buddhi* is ascertainment (power of determination) or will. Virtue or righteousness, knowledge, detachment or dispassion and attainments like perfection are its manifestations when the *Sattva* attribute abounds. In the reverse

state, the *Tamas*, the opposite of it, manifests.

Bhava Education

"These are eight *Bhavas* of *buddhi*; four, positive and four, negative. The *sattvika* positive *bhavas* like self-direction, self-knowledge, detachment and self-efficacy form the core building block and are an important educational tool for continuous growth. By the study of the operation of the *Gun*as within us and by the practice of *ashtanga* yoga, the *sattvika* disposition can be cultivated. The opposite is the darker or negative side. In direct contrast to the *sattvika* disposition is the *tamasic* disposition. It includes traits like lack of self-direction or *adharma*, ignorance or *ajnana*, *raga* or attachment and weakness of will or *anaiswarya*. In this kind the experiential learning opportunities, personal observation and reflections are encouraged. For example,



JNANA

DHARMA Self-direction in a positive manner	JNANA Self-Knowledge Concentration—outer & inner	VIRAGYA Detachment & objectivity	AISHWARYA Self-actualisation Strength or <i>Bala</i>
Dharma practices, Meditative postures a) Practice <i>Sukhasana</i> for 3 to 4 mins. b) <i>Sthitaprajna</i> Experiences of quietude and steadiness c) <i>Pratipaksha bhavana</i> (actively challenging negative thoughts) d) Self-discipline—routines	Jnana Practice a) Techniques for Body-awareness Asana (cultural, dynamic Asana) b) Breath awareness/ <i>Pranayama</i> c) Sense awareness—Concentration on the tip and the nose or on candle flame. d) Attitude of co-ordination	Viragya Practices a) Relaxation posture or <i>Savasana</i> b) Twisting asana c) Forward-bending asana. It generates the feeling of flexibility and surrender d) Karma yoga attitude.	Aishwarya Practice a) <i>Jal Neti</i> , cleaning the nostrils by pouring saline warm water. <i>Kapalbhati</i> , done with rapid non-forceful exhalation. It generates the feeling of freshness and self-reliance. Backward-bending asana. It strengthens the will power.

awareness of the Dharma *bhava* can be initiated through an activity or role play showing or showcasing chaos and confusion, the opposite of dharma. Posing questions through group discussions like 'What is self-direction according to you?', 'Why is routine necessary?' and 'Why should one follow one's duty?' is necessary for this kind of education.

The negative and positive traits of the *buddhi* which is impregnated with these *Guna* patterns and disposition co-exist in the *buddhi* and therefore are not a separate category.

The effort is to perceive the inertia due to *Tamas* and discover the alternatives. For this, the techniques associated with the term





nirodha (regulatory practices) and Yoga Anustana being established in self-development with discipline has to be formulated as a practical counterpart.

As stated in *Samkhya Karika* 44, *Dharmena gamanam urdhvam adhastad bhavatyadharmena*. The choice is with us what direction we take. The *sattvika bhava*, Dharma and *jnana* gives us scope for self-direction and knowledge.

Dharma is the foundational *bhava*. This can be experienced after the practice of the meditative posture, *Sukhasana*. Watching the breath at the nostril while inhaling and exhaling gives one the experience of calmness and quietude. The *sattvika* feeling is experienced.

Similarly, the practice of cultural Asana like *Bhujangasana* or *Parvatasana* will give one the knowledge of the body. Done with the co-ordination and synchronisation of the body, mind and breath, it will result in greater awareness of oneself. The Mudra practices alter the attitude, moods and energy

levels in a positive manner. *Jnana Mudra* and *Prana Mudra* pave the way for one's self-development because they help to balance the elements and energy related to one's overall well-being.

Physical education (as it is called), the role of Asanas, and its inherent value in neuromuscular co-ordination is extremely beneficial for the total physical health. Simple asanas for intra-abdominal compression and the vertical, lateral and torsion stretches are found to be very useful in improving the functioning of various internal organs. What Yoga physical education regards of great value is its effect on the mind and the nervous system.

Similarly, mind-training techniques like Yoga *bhavana* help in inculcating values. As one observes the negative tendencies with awareness and brings about positive or its opposite thinking, it has a tremendous power to impress upon the mind *sattvika* virtues like *ahimsa*, *tapas* and *Ishvara pranidhana*. The yoga *anga* (limbs), *yama* and *niyama*, have to be given a prominent place. The inner process of the assimilation of virtues and values through the practice of *bhavana* is a core foundation for

self-growth. The practice of *niyama saucha* or purification by *sattva* leads to mastery over the senses and a pleasant state of mind. The term used is *Sattva Shuddhi* in 2. 41 in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. This is the potential of *Sattva* in bringing about refinement in a person. In 2.28 of the same text, the term used is *ashuddhi ksaye*. The *ashuddhi* manifests in the form of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, and the *ashuddhi* needs to be worked upon. Ignorance is destroyed when this mental conviction grows, and when the awareness about the operation of the *Gunas* increases, then one is able to replace the *Tamas* with the *Sattva Guna*. Education should raise us to this level of contemplation.

Here, the Gita is very relevant. It says, "Let a man lift himself by himself. Let him not degrade himself. By using the words 'friend' and 'foe', it means every one of us has the freedom to rise. To rise or fall is in our hands."

To let go is not a passive withdrawal but it is a qualified concentration brought about by objective insights. This is attained by the repeated practice of relaxation. This can alter responses in a positive way. Practices like *Shavasana* and the 'Om' *japa* generate the feeling of 'let-go' and surrender.

The practice is called Yogendra Nishpanda Bhava. This technique is done by focusing on sounds in a relaxed sitting posture with the eyes closed. The relaxed attention and detached participation is experienced while listening to the sounds—the near and faraway fading sounds. It helps in cultivating a responsive and receptive state of mind and this can gradually arrest the reactive state. It enhances listening skills.

To understand what is changeful in one and what is the change contributing to one's self-growth needs a course outline which includes the study of Samkhya yoga philosophy and practice, value orientation content and a teaching methodology that encourages its application to real-life situations. This will provide a full range of holistic experience of our own inner world.

Good health, mental steadiness and emotional stability through *bhava* education can supplement and complement the modern education. Whatever little conquests over the *tamasic* traits one gains by constant practice and self-observation goes a long way to restore growth and balance in oneself.

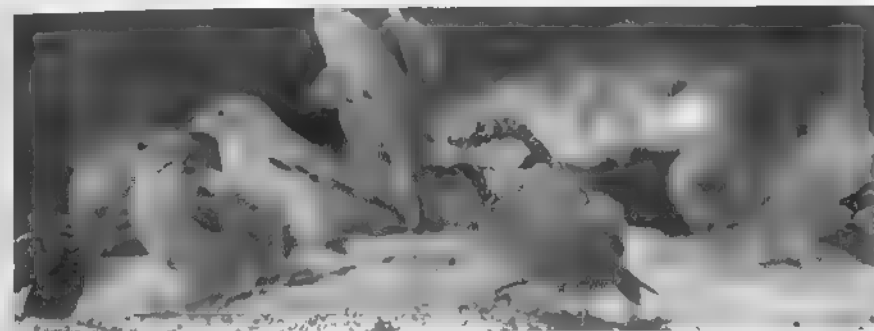
World Sparrow Day

Jayanthi Subramaniam

The little sparrows used to find a home in every housing society. But the sparrow community had dwindled as the radiation from the TV antennas was getting too much for them.

World Sparrow Day, which is observed on March 20, is an occasion to create awareness about the house sparrow and other common birds that exist in the urban environment and of threats to their population. Greenery surrounded with bamboo bushes in housing societies can help support the cause and bring more birds and avoid the extinction of sparrows in the next two decades.

World Sparrow Day is an international initiative by the Nature Forever Society of India in collaboration with the Eco-Sys Action Foundation and numerous other national and international organisations across the world. The Nature Forever Society was started



by Mohammed Dilawar, an Indian conservationist who started his work helping the house sparrow in Nashik and who was named one of the 'Heroes of the Environment' in 2008 for his efforts by *Time* magazine. The idea of marking a 'World Sparrow Day' came up during an informal discussion at the Nature Forever Society's office. The idea was to earmark a day for the house sparrow to convey the message of conservation of the house sparrow and other common birds and also to mark a day of celebration to appreciate the beauty of the common biodiversity which is taken so much for granted. The first World Sparrow Day was celebrated in 2010 in different regions of the world. The day was celebrated by carrying out various kinds of activities and events like art competitions, awareness campaigns

and sparrow processions as well as interactions with the media.

World Sparrow Day also has a broader vision of providing a platform where people who are working on the conservation of the house sparrow and other common birds can network, collaborate and exchange conservation ideas, which will lead to better science and improved results. It aims to provide a meeting ground for people from different parts of the world to come together and form a force that can play an important role in advocacy and in spreading the awareness on the need of conserving common biodiversity or species of lower conservation status.

As aware residents, we must make an effort to encourage more feathered creatures, including sparrows, to build their nests among us. Both food and water should be provided to them to support this cause and bring the sparrow to our doorsteps. ●

The Pavement Bookstalls of Mumbai

N. V. Krishna Kumar

Mumbai's pavement booksellers are more than just merchants of the written word; they are the curators of cultural landmarks.

The pavement bookshops of Mumbai are a haven for book lovers—a place where ideas and imagination intersect.

The most iconic pavement bookstall was the one behind the American Express Bank building at Flora Fountain (that building houses the Bank of India offices now; and Flora Fountain has been rechristened as Hutatma Chowk). What drew one there was not just

the rows of books but the charm of the booksellers themselves. They were part-magician, part-librarian, and entirely attuned to the pulse of their customers. Bestsellers were always prominently displayed, but finding something niche—a forgotten Hemingway novel or an obscure philosophical treatise—was where their mastery shone. You would enquire about a title, and the bookseller would vanish behind the precariously stacked piles, emerging moments later with a triumphant smile and the sought-after book.

Each of these stalls had a loyal canine companion lounging nearby

with a *patta* around its neck; it was always well-fed and unconcerned by the chaos of the city. These dogs seemed to embody the quiet confidence of their owners. Perhaps they understood the symbiotic relationship between bookseller and buyer better than anyone else did. After all, in those days, the books on sale were mostly originals, not pirated copies. You could find treasures at throwaway prices.

A short walk from Flora Fountain brought you to the pavement near the Central Telegraph Office (CTO) en route to Churchgate station. This was a smorgasbord offering not just books but a variety of magazines

too. Before the internet, this was where you came to feast on international publications. Fodor's travel guides were particularly popular then; their well-thumbed pages, a testament to the dreams of both locals and foreigners planning their next great adventure. Backpackers would crowd the stalls, their Fodor's clutched tightly alongside their Lonely Planets, as they browsed and bartered.

Not to be missed was the *vada pav* stall adjacent to this pavement book stall at the CTO. The *vada pav* is Mumbai's soul food. Generations of office-goers, students, and locals have relished the perfectly spiced *vadas*, sandwiched in soft *pav* and



served with a tangy chutney and fried green chillis at this makeshift *vada pav* stall. Even today, the aroma wafting through the air draws crowds daily, blending nostalgia with the bustle of urban life. Affordable yet irresistibly delicious, this humble stall is a reminder of Mumbai's love for street food and the joy of simple, timeless flavours.

Colaba's pavement bookstalls catered to a different taste—a more eclectic mix of coffee-table books and visual-heavy tomes. While they lacked the literary variety of the pavement bookstalls of Flora Fountain or the CTO, they made up for it with their sheer aesthetic appeal. You could pick up glossy volumes on art, architecture, or Bollywood for a fraction of their original cost, perfect for adorning a drawing-room.

What made these pavement bookshops more than just retail spaces was their socio-cultural role. They were melting pots, where

students, writers, professors, and curious passers-by converged. Conversations about politics, literature, and life were sparked over stacks of books. For many, this was a crash course in worldviews that formal education did not offer. The booksellers themselves—street-smart, resourceful, and often philosophical—were integral to this ecosystem. They were not just selling books; they were curators of culture, connecting readers to worlds they might never have discovered otherwise.

Over the years, Mumbai's pavement bookstalls have changed. Piracy has crept in, and digital books threaten to render physical copies obsolete. Yet, the charm of these bookshops endures. They remain spaces of serendipity, where you don't just find books—you find stories, connections, and sometimes, yourself. As noted by Salman Rushdie, these bookstalls are "a sanctuary for the wandering mind".

<p>SWEET THOUGHT</p> <p>Sri Krishna Sweets</p> <p>PRODUCERS OF PURE GHEE SWEETS</p>	 <p>"Dharma is more important than any divine boon"</p> <p>- Lord Sri Rama</p>
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A Literary and Cinematic Legend

D. Romikuttan

Meppaattu Vasudevan Nair, popularly known as M.T., was a towering figure in the world of Malayalam literature and cinema. With a career that spanned over seven decades, he became one of the most influential and beloved voices of modern Malayalam writing. His profound contributions as a novelist, short story writer, editor, screenplay writer, and film-maker have shaped the literary and cinematic landscape of Kerala. Iconic works like *Naalukettu*, *Kaalam* and *Randamoozham* have earned him a permanent place in the hearts of



readers, while his cinematic brilliance, showcased in films such as *Oru Vadakkan Veeragatha* and *Perumthachan*, continue to inspire film-makers across generations. M.T.'s legacy is further enriched by

his role as the editor of *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, where he nurtured emerging literary talent. Honoured with the Jnanpith Award, the Padma Bhushan and National Film Awards, M.T. left behind a wealth of timeless works that transcend boundaries, influencing not just literature and cinema but also the very fabric of Kerala's cultural identity. His passing away on December 25, 2024, marked the end of an era, but his impact will endure for years to come.

Early Journey

M.T., born on July 15, 1933 in the village of Kudallur near Ponnani, Kerala, was the youngest of four children in the family of T. Narayanan Nair and Ammalu Amma. His early years were spent between Kudallur and Punnayurkulam, his father's village. Although his family did not foster a reading culture, M.T. developed an interest in writing from a young age and began publishing his works in magazines. "Unlike other boys of my age, I was not very interested in playing. There was only one game I could play alone—writing," he once told *Outlook* magazine.

He attended Malamakkavu Elementary School and later,

Kumaranallur High School. After completing his schooling, M.T. pursued a degree in Chemistry from Government Victoria College, Palakkad, graduating in 1953. Initially, he worked as a teacher at various schools in the Malabar region before briefly serving as a Gram Sevak at the Block Development Office in Taliparamba, Kannur.

In 1957, M.T. joined the *Mathrubhumi Weekly* as a sub-editor, marking the beginning of his influential career in journalism. He later became its editor, mentoring a generation of future Malayalam writers, including Punathil Kunjabdulla and N.S. Madhavan.

The Beauty of Storytelling

M.T.'s literary journey began during his college years when his short story 'Valarthumrugangal',



set against the backdrop of a circus, won a global competition conducted by the *New York Herald Tribune*, *Mathrubhumi*, and *Hindustan Times*. This early recognition marked the beginning of a distinguished career that saw M.T. create masterpieces across various genres, from novels and short stories to screenplays and essays.

His first novel, *Naalukettu* (1958), which vividly portrayed the decline of the Nair feudal family system, was deeply rooted in the socio-cultural fabric of Kerala. This novel earned him the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1959. Recognised as a timeless classic, *Naalukettu* played a pivotal role in revitalising Malayalam literary traditions during the 1950s. By 2008, the novel had undergone 23 reprints, been translated into 14 languages, achieved record-breaking sales of over half a million copies, and



continued to feature prominently in bestseller lists.

M.T.'s subsequent works further cemented his reputation as a literary luminary. His second novel, *Asuravithu* (1962), explored the disintegration of traditional values in a changing Kerala, while *Kaalam* (1969), which won the Sahitya Akademi Award for the best novel in 1970, examined themes of societal transformation with his signature lyrical prose. In *Manju* (1964), M.T. delved into the themes of ecological balance and feminism, showcasing his ability to weave compelling narratives that resonated deeply with readers. His magnum opus, *Randamoozham* (1984), reimagined the Mahabharata through the eyes of Bhima, offering fresh psychological depth to the epic. This mythological novel won the prestigious Vayalar Award in 1985. M.T. continued to push his creative boundaries with *Varanasi* (2002), an experimental novel blending personal reminiscences with profound philosophical undertones, reflecting on time, memory and existence.

In addition to his novels, M.T.'s contributions to short stories and drama had solidified his reputation



as a literary luminary. His short stories, including 'Irutinte Athmavu', 'Olavum Theeravum' and 'Kuttyedathy', offered poignant explorations of rural life and human relationships. Stories like 'Kurukkante Kalyanam' and 'Shilalikhithangal' highlighted the cruelties and complexities of rural existence, while works such as *Vanaprastham* explored intricate emotional dynamics. His play *Gopuranadayil* earned the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Drama in 1982, while his short story 'Swargam Thurakkunna Samayam' was similarly recognised in 1986. These works showcased M.T.'s remarkable ability to bridge traditional and modern themes, enriching Malayalam literature with profound narrative brilliance and thematic diversity.

The Soul of Themes

M.T.'s novels, such as *Naalukettu* and *Asuravithu*, explored the seismic shift from a traditional, feudal society to a modern one in Kerala. Through richly drawn characters, M.T. examined the personal and cultural upheavals triggered by this transformation. As old agrarian structures and the joint family system began to disintegrate, his protagonists had to navigate the complexities of a society that was rapidly changing. They often experienced a profound sense of loss and confusion as they confronted the disappearance of traditional values and ways of life.

A major theme in M.T.'s work was the impact of caste and patriarchy on individuals. His characters were often caught in the grip of these oppressive social systems, which shaped their identities and life choices. Through their struggles, M.T. offered deep psychological insights into the ways in which caste-based discrimination and male dominance restricted personal freedom. These systems of exploitation were portrayed not just as external forces but as internalised burdens that weighed

heavily on the emotional and moral lives of his characters.

What set M.T. apart was his focus on personal, rather than political narratives. While other writers of his time were deeply engaged with class and political ideologies, M.T.'s attention remained on the inner turmoil of his characters as they responded to societal changes. In *Randamoozham*, Bhima's perspective shifts the emphasis from heroic glory to the raw realities of human vulnerability and struggle. Through his exploration of personal conflict amidst broader social change, M.T.'s works maintained a timeless relevance, offering rich, psychologically complex portraits of individuals at the crossroads of tradition and modernity.

Signature Style

M.T. was celebrated for his signature style that combined simplicity, elegance, and an innate understanding of human emotions. His language was rooted in authenticity, weaving narratives that resonated deeply with the lives and experiences of ordinary people. This remarkable ability endeared him to readers across generations.

As noted by literary critic M.K. Sanoo, M.T.'s craft lay in his meticulous choice of words. Each word was carefully selected to evoke the precise mood and reveal the inner emotions of his characters. This precision was what made his works so compelling and relatable, transporting readers into the depths of his storytelling universe.

M.T.'s devotion to writing was widely admired. He never compromised on his craft and worked relentlessly to achieve perfection. His dedication was evident in the way he meticulously constructed his plots and wrote his dialogues. Whether in films, novels, or short stories, M.T. had the rare ability to create unforgettable dialogues. His sentences, too, were equally powerful, leaving a lasting impact on the reader or viewer. Another defining feature of M.T.'s style was his ability to explore the complexities of human relationships. His works were a testament to his unparalleled craftsmanship. Be it in the world of literature or cinema, his legacy was built on a foundation of simplicity, precision, and a profound understanding of the human spirit. His art continues to inspire and

amaze, reminding us of the enduring power of a well-told story.

Cinematic Milestones

M.T. was a masterful scriptwriter who redefined and transformed the art of screenplay writing in Malayalam cinema, blending literary brilliance with cinematic storytelling to create timeless masterpieces. Though initially reluctant, he revolutionised the art of screenwriting and authored some of the most iconic scripts in Malayalam cinema, leaving an indelible mark on the industry.

He began his film journey with *Murappennu* (1965), exploring joint family systems and consanguineous marriages, followed by significant works like *Iruttinte Athmavu* (1967) and *Asuravithu* (1968). *Olavum Theeravum* (1970), based on his story, marked the beginning of the Malayalam New Wave with its realistic approach to film-making.

M.T.'s collaboration with directors like Hariharan and I.V. Sasi significantly enriched Malayalam mainstream cinema in the 1980s. His partnership with Hariharan yielded masterpieces such as *Oru Vadakkan Veeragatha*, which reinterpreted a classic folk

tale, while his collaboration with I.V. Sasi resulted in commercially and critically successful films. These partnerships not only strengthened the narrative depth of Malayalam cinema but also catalysed the careers of the film-makers themselves.

Among his most notable works were a trilogy of films featuring teenage girls as protagonists, *Aranyakam* (1988), *Nakhakshathangal* (1986), and *Ennu Swantham Janakikutty* (1998), all directed by Hariharan. These films were celebrated for their authentic portrayal of youth, with *Aranyakam* being particularly praised for its complex character portrayal of Ammini and its political depth, while *Panchagni*



A scene from the movie *Oru Vadakkan Veeragatha*



A scene from the movie *Nirmalyam*

introduced the strong-willed and revolutionary Indira, whose principles connected deeply with audiences.

As a director, M.T. helmed *Nirmalyam* (1973), his debut film, which won the National Award for

Best Film. This was followed by other critically acclaimed directorial ventures such as *Bandhanam* (1978), *Vaarikuzhi* (1982), *Manju* (1983), *Kadavu* (1991), and *Oru Cheru Punchiri* (2000). His characters varied significantly in tone, from the anguished oracle in *Nirmalyam*, symbolising societal decay, to the contented retired life of Krishna Kurup in *Oru Cheru Punchiri*.

Some of M.T.'s most enduring screenplays, including *Theerthadanam*, *Amrutham Gamaya*, *Aksharangal*, *Aalkoottathil Thaniye*, *Thazhvaram*, *Parinayam*, and others, brought to life unforgettable characters. His unparalleled skill in crafting compelling, multi-dimensional characters set his work apart in Malayalam cinema.

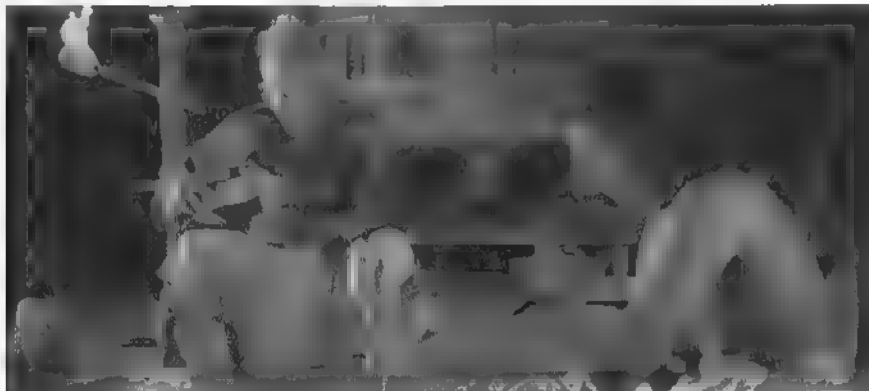
M.T. also penned Malayalam cinema classics such as *Vaishali*

M.T. also penned Malayalam cinema classics such as *Vaishali* and *Perumthachan*. His work has left

serving as essential references for aspiring screenwriters.



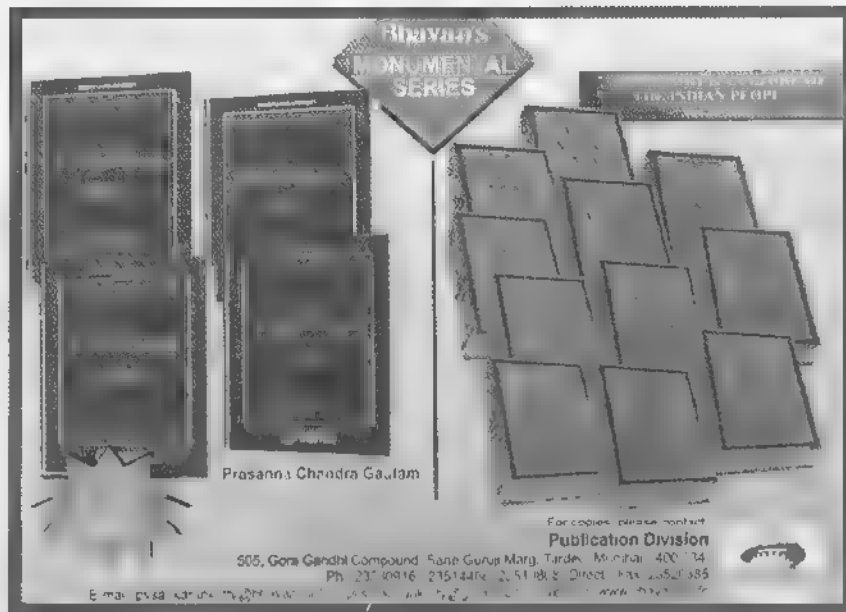
A still from the film *Vaishali*



A scene from the movie *Perumthachan*

and *Perumthachan*. His work has left a lasting impact on the industry, earning him four National Awards for screen-writing. His characters and intricate scripts continue to influence Malayalam cinema, serving as essential references for

aspiring screenwriters. The timelessness of his work is evident in how most of these characters and narratives are relevant even today, seamlessly aligning with the themes and styles of the current new wave in mainstream cinema. ●



Shraddhanjali

Vasant K Saraf



Distinguished Director General of Police, who joined the Police Service of the then bilingual state before the formation of Maharashtra State, Vasant Keshav Saraf (90) IPS, passed away at a private hospital on October 10, 2024.

V. K. Saraf had been closely associated with the Bhavan since decades.

Saraf was the author of several books and scholarly monographs as well as many articles and short stories. Apart from being a regular contributor to *Bhavan's Journal*, the Bhavan was fortunate to publish two of his books, namely (i) *Essentials of Good Leadership* and (ii) *The Mystery of Karma: An Exposition of the Law of Karma*. Both the books had been well-received by the public.

The Bhavan prays to the Almighty to give eternal peace and tranquillity to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved family to bear this loss.

Childhood

R. P. Dwivedi

As perceived by two poets—Wordsworth and Tagore

Childhood is the foundation on which stands the edifice of life. It is universally praised and glorified for its innate noble traits and moral virtues. Our scriptures eulogise childlike innocence, simplicity, non-attachment (असंगता) and silence (मौन) and exhort even learned scholars to cultivate these qualities for acquiring wisdom and truth. For instance, the most learned Narada went to the eternal five-year old innocent child Sanat Kumar for moral and spiritual perfection. And Jesus Christ prayed to God, saying: "Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babies." (Matthew 11:25). He also

told people, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3)

Let us see what two of the greatest poets thought of childhood. The English poet William Wordsworth is famed for his assertion that 'The child is father of the man'. Its general interpretation that the child embodies in himself basic qualities which grow into the fully grown-up man, has a deeper significance. In fact, the child has certain inborn qualities and capabilities to experience truths that remain hidden from men of intellectual conceit and egoism. Since truth generally lies hidden beneath

outward appearance, it is revealed to the child of innocence and pure heart because he is totally free from sophistication and ways of the world.

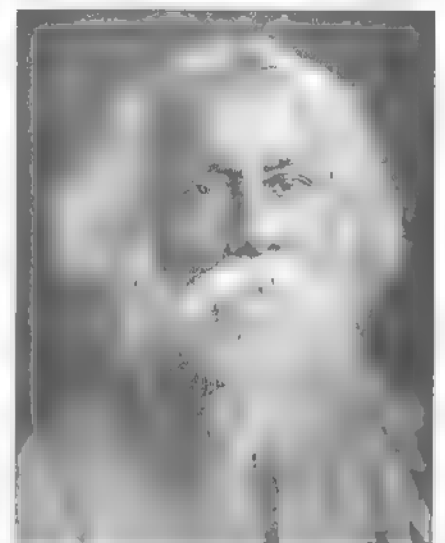
Wordsworth was as much a preacher of mankind as he was a high priest of Nature. As a 'Creative Soul' (*The Prelude*), he, in his 'musings in solitude', set out to 'dwell on man, nature and human life' (*The Recluse*). Having a reflective mind and being a 'seer', he could 'see into the life of things' and experience 'that serene and blessed mood' in which the 'vision splendid' dawned upon him. And he had the gift of capturing and recollecting vividly a series of delightful impressions of his happy childhood spent in the idyllic

surroundings of serene loveliness and the irresistible charm of Nature which he instructively linked with his inner faith and convictions. The recapitulation of his childhood memories culminated in his theory of poetry as 'emotions recollected in tranquillity'.

His belief in the immortality of the soul and its pre-existence reinforced his conviction of man's origin as 'celestial', and the 'infant babe' (*The Prelude*) as a fresh arrival from heaven. Since children come 'from God Who is our home', they come to us 'not in entire forgetfulness, and not in utter nakedness' but as 'trailing clouds of glory do (they) come'. He maintains that the little innocent child retains



William Wordsworth



Rabindranath Tagore



a hazy, faint and indistinct memory of heaven which he calls 'imperial palace' or God's home.

He declares that in his pristine innocence, intuitive faculty and deep insight, the child obscurely experiences in the early stages, 'the heavenly light' or visionary gleams. In moments of joy or mundaneness, the innocent child who is in tune with 'primal sympathy', perceives 'the glory and the dream' of his pre-natal existence which slowly fades away as he advances in age. In such a state of exalted consciousness, Wordsworth glorifies the child as the 'best philosopher', an 'eye among the blind', a 'Mighty prophet' and a 'Seer blest, on whom those truths do rest, which we are toiling all our lives to find.'

In short, Wordsworth's affirmation of the gradual evanescence of the 'heavenly light in

maturing years and its eventual disappearance' 'into the light of common day' or 'in the dreary intercourse of daily life' finds passionate and exquisite poetic expression in his 'Ode', in which he expounds his own philosophy of life as well as the edification of childhood in a semi-mystical mood. The 'Ode' is therefore known as the spiritual autobiography of Wordsworth. In the words of W.B. Yeats, "In Wordsworth's church, there is an altar but no pulpit."

As for Rabindranath Tagore, his concept of childhood arises from his genuinely contemplative mind, mystical intuition and faith that the true business of man is to observe God in His creation, draw inspiration from it and seek communion with Him.

For him, the child is a gift of God and is essential for the continuity of the human race on earth.

He declared, "Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man." He eulogised the child as an index of divine creative urge and said, "The Great is a born child; when he dies, he gives his great childhood to the world." (from *Stray Birds*). At another place, Tagore gives exquisite expression to the inmost yearning of every woman to be blessed with a child: "'Where have I come from, where did you pick me up?' The baby asked its mother. She answered, half crying and clasping the baby to her breast, 'You were hidden in my heart as its desire, my darling. You were the dolls of my childhood games; and when with clay I made the image of my God every morning, I made and unmade you then.'" (*The Beginning*).

His concept of 'the perfect child' specifies two essential qualities, namely 'Creative spirit' and 'generous joy in his play'. He further stresses the value of full freedom, ample opportunities and adequate exposure to Nature and its beautified surroundings for the growth of the child's true awareness, understanding and knowledge. Proper encouragement is also necessary for his moral growth, free

expression and the achievement of his/ her fullest potential.

Tagore, like Wordsworth, believed that the baby was completely free in his pre-existence or pre-natal state, lived in the land of the tiny crescent moon 'in absolute freedom which is almost lost on earth'. Yet he still retains the capacity of perceiving truths hardly known to adults. He said, "Baby knows all manner of wise words, though few on earth can understand their meaning." (*The Crescent Moon*). Tagore regards Nature as the charming and living manifestation of God's creative glory and lays stress on the filial tender and pious relationship between it and man (*Homo Additus*



Natura). He vehemently denounces all finery (a prince's robes and his jewelled chain) as bondage (formidable obstruction) between the child and Nature because it keeps him away from her (dust) and this restrains him from entering the world or 'the great fair of common life'. (Verse 8). As narrated in verse no. 62, the joyous and spontaneous responses of the child to the charming objects with their sight (coloured toys), sound (song), taste (sweets) and touch (loving kiss) testify to the child's innate affinity and abiding love for Mother Nature.

Here, the spontaneous and delightful responses of the child and his sense-perceptions are transmuted and transfigured into the charming aspects and phenomena of Nature. Moreover, in a characteristic transcendental mood, Tagore visualises the universe as 'endless worlds', earth as 'seashore and children's play and merry morning in the spirit of purity of heart, innocence and complete non-attachment as suggestive of these virtues as eternal pathways to divinity (verse no. 60). In this context, W.B. Yeats' insightful comment is remarkable: 'Indeed, when he is speaking of

children, so much a part of himself this quality seems, one is not certain that he is not also speaking of the saints.' In fact, Tagore himself exemplifies noble and spiritual virtues which can lead to the fulfilment of human aspirations. Most of his lyrics and poems reflect his childlike simplicity, meekness and devotional attitude. They are the sincere outpourings of the cherished lofty virtues which idealise his concept of childhood. In the words of W.B. Yeats, "These lyrics display in their thought a world I have dreamed of all my life long... The work of a supreme culture... these verses are images of the heart turning to God..... that heart is in union or in separation (seeking) God Himself." (Introduction to *Gitanjali*).

Both Wordsworth and Tagore were essentially seer-poets who had mystic visions of the Eternal beneath the ephemeral existence. Both of them affirmed the intrinsic worth of childlike innocence, love, purity of heart and piety through their sincere adoration of childhood. To both of them, childhood epitomised 'the cradle of bliss' on the one hand, while the world seemed as a prison house or 'a vale of woes' on the other. ●

All about Progeny

Geetha Srinivasan

Having dedicated her entire life to Ayurveda with utmost devotion, Dr. Shubhankari P. Rao has been successful in filling life into the wombs of countless women, through Ayurvedic treatment and with her hopeful message: 'Infertility, no more a burning problem'.

"Fertility decline is a global phenomenon. Any abnormality or malformation of any of the essentials of pregnancy, harms the fertility outcome. Ayurveda takes into account the individual's body constitution and aims to enhance the body system involved in fertilisation. Diet, care of the reproductive system from a very

young age and lifestyle choices that affect fertility, like obesity, stress, smoking and environmental



pollutants, are to be avoided. All Ayurvedic therapies aim to rejuvenate, improve the immune system, and revitalise the mind, the body and the soul. All fertility-enhancing medicines, known as Rasayana and Vajikarana, enhance fertility in both the male and the female," says Dr. Shubhankari while discussing the intricacies of infertility.

Apart from completing her general education in Bangalore (Bengaluru), Dr. Shubhankari has equipped herself with BSAM (Bachelor in the System of Ayurvedic Medicines) and BAMS (Bachelor in Ayurvedic Medicines and Surgery). She has also done an Ayurvedic Orientation Course 2003 AIAC, Trichy, Tamil Nadu, and Fellowship of Royal Asiatic Society from the Royal Asiatic Society London.

She specialises in treating infertility, gynaecological disorders, antenatal care, hair care and cosmetic problems, anorectal diseases, joint disorders, gastrointestinal disorders, obesity, endocrine disorders and nervous disorders.

Many awards and accolades have adorned Dr. Shubhankari. These include Bangalore University Chess Championship—1978, State Chess

Champion no. 3 for 1976, 1977 and 1978, College Athletic Championship for two years (1977 and 1978), Yagnavalkya Prashasthi—1999 on the 31st Anniversary of Sri Yagnavalkya Seva Trust, Bangalore, and Sri Yagnavalkya Yuvaka Sanga, Chaitanya Prakashana, Dr. R. Shantaveerappa Samsarana Puraskar by the Kannada Sahitya Parishat (Bangalore), the Kaschaparathna award for rendering Ayurvedic services/ Ayurveda Seva Prashasti by Dhanwantari Ayurvedic Trust.

Interestingly, all the family members of Dr. Shubhankari—her late husband Dr. V. R. Padmanabha Rao, her son Dr. Samarth Rao, her daughter Dr. Sanmathi P Rao, her daughter-in-law Dr. Vibhuthi Rao and her son-in-law Dr. Puneeth—are all well-known dedicated Ayurvedic practitioners.

Hearteningly, Dr. Shubhankari has rendered her services in a number of rural medical camps conducted by different organisations.

She has participated in several conferences in India and abroad and has authored several books in English and Kannada and has written more than 1,000 articles which have been published

in English newspapers and magazines that are aimed at the general public as well as medical professionals.

She has served as the co-founder of Agnivesha Ayurveda Anushtana and has given many CME programmes for Ayurvedic practice.

She has been treating countless couples considered infertile in her Shubhankari Ayurvedic Chikitsalaya in Bank Colony, Bengaluru.

Her blessed hands are toiling to fill the arms of pained mothers with a baby, replacing every stressful sigh with a divine smile.

Excerpt from an interview with Dr. Shubhankari P. Rao

What is infertility?

A couple that is married for almost a year and is sexually active but still fails to conceive, is considered infertile.

What are the factors essential for culminating in pregnancy?

- ◆ The **womb**, where a fertilised egg gets implanted and develops into a baby. Until its birth, it should be healthy.
- ◆ **Secretions**, essential for nourishing the baby, should be in ample amount.

- ◆ An egg, which has got matured in the ovary, has to be released at the right time.
- ◆ **Timing** of the sexual activity during this period is vital.
- ◆ **Sperms** deposited must travel up from the vagina, through the uterus to the fallopian tubes.
- ◆ The sperm has to **fertilise** the egg to form an embryo.
- ◆ The **embryo** has to travel through the fallopian tube to the uterus, where it gets implanted into the uterine wall (in a process called implantation), after which



It develops into a baby until its birth.

What is the cause of infertility?

The major cause for infertility in recent times, is delaying child-bearing to a later age. Postponing the marital age leads to postponing the child-bearing age. For a woman to conceive, the production of healthy sperms by the male and healthy eggs by the female is very important.

Several other causes include:

- ◆ Blockage, either in the fallopian tubes or the uterus. The pathway for the sperms to travel, meet the egg and fertilise the same, should be clear.
 - ◆ Good embryo quality is essential. The sperm has to go and pierce the egg and the ability of the fertilised egg to get implanted in the female uterus is very important. For that, the quality of the embryo should also be good.
 - ◆ And finally, for the pregnancy to continue to full term, the embryo must be healthy and the female's nutritional environment should support its development.
- If one of these factors is impaired then the pregnancy will not continue; infertility will continue.

What are the risk factors?

Male Infertility:

- ◆ IT life, where the men keep their laptop on their lap and then continue working for long hours sitting in one place for a long time.
- ◆ Enlarged veins—varicocele in the scrotum (the sac that contains the testes).
- ◆ Genetic disorders such as cystic fibrosis.
- ◆ High heat exposure to testicles due to tight clothing or frequent use of hot tubs.
- ◆ Injury to the scrotum.
- ◆ Low sperm count or low testosterone (hypogonadism).
- ◆ Misuse of anabolic steroids.
- ◆ Premature ejaculation or retrograde ejaculation.
- ◆ Testicular cancer and treatments.
- ◆ Unhealthy sperms (non-functional and slow-moving).
- ◆ Morphological defects formed in the sperms because of nutritional deficiencies.

Female Infertility:

- ◆ **Problems in the womb:** The lining of the inner part of the womb should not have any overgrowth. If there is overgrowth then it can create finger-like projections that attach to the walls of the uterus,

known as uterine polyps. The shape of the uterus also matters; if it is occupied with lumps/ growths called fibroids, they can stop a fertilised egg from implanting in the uterus. In addition, large fibroids may prevent a baby from growing fully due to its decreased space in the uterus.

- ◆ The cervix is the gateway to the uterus. Any scar tissue in the cervix can narrow or close the canal, making it difficult for pregnancy to occur. If the passage is loose/ patulous, it can lead to premature birth or miscarriage and if the mucus, which facilitates the entry of the sperms, is abnormal then it can prevent the sperm from entering the uterus.

- ◆ **Problems in the ovary:** When the ovaries do not release an egg each month or if the egg is not released regularly or if there is a premature loss of eggs, then pregnancy becomes difficult. Fallopian tube damage or blockage prevents sperms and eggs from meeting or an embryo from reaching the uterus.

- ◆ **Endometriosis:** The endometrial tissue implants around the ovaries or fallopian tube where it can cause inflammation and scar tissue. This inflammation alters the immune system, changes the environment around the ovaries, prevents the implantation of an embryo and alters the quality of the eggs.

- ◆ **Primary ovarian failure:** This





means that the ovaries have stopped working.

- ◆ Pelvic adhesions can also happen from pelvic infection, appendicitis, endometriosis or surgery of the abdomen and pelvis.

How is the problem evaluated?

For the female ultrasound scanning, both a general transitional scan and abdominal scan will help. It will help us find out whether there are fibroids in the woman's uterus, in the structure of the uterus, whether there are defects in the uterus, and what type of uterus she has—a unicornuate or a bicornuate uterus. If the woman has this type of an irregularly-shaped uterus, then implantation of the baby will be difficult and in case she gets pregnant, then there is a higher risk for miscarriage.

Next, fibroid in the uterus or endometrium, or any blockages, tubal blockages, or hydrosalpinx

infection in the tubes, etc. can be found out with the help of ultrasound scanning.

Modern allopathic doctors carry out hormonal tests. But we do not depend upon that. We just diagnose by our *vata-kapha* factors. And depending on that, we give the patients medicines.

For the males, semen analysis is done, for which they have to take a simple DNA fragmentation test.

How about Naadi test?

I conduct a *Naadi* test and I also maintain a *vata-pitta-kapha* temperature chart. Accordingly, I diagnose and do the treatment. We do not rely more on the reports.

Why is infertility becoming a common problem of this era?

Extreme changes in the lifestyle of working people in today's times is one of the most important reasons for the inability to conceive. An increase in smoking and drinking



habits among men and women leads to low fertility levels.


How does Ayurveda treat infertility?

Infertility treatment aims to improve the overall reproductive health of the individual with body-friendly medications and therapies. After the initial cleansing procedures, treatments are aimed at the cause of infertility.

There are some effective treatments to improve the egg

quality. The *Uttara Basti* treatment is aimed at improving the quality of the endometrium. *Kshara Basti* procedure is used to correct ovulation defects. The TOT treatment is used for opening the tubes which are blocked. *Matra Basti* procedure is useful for supporting implantation, etc.

Rasayana and *Vajikarana* therapies are done for male reproductive health after the completion of Panchakarma procedures.

<p>SWEET THOUGHT</p> <p>Sri Krishna Sweets</p> <p>PRODUCERS OF PURE GHEE SWEETS</p>	 <p>"In the happiness of his Subjects lies king's happiness, in their welfare, his welfare"</p> <p>- Lord Sri Rama</p>
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Huxley's Take on Translated Works

Kamlesh Tripathi

An author whom we have read only in translation and have no direct acquaintance; we only have to infer him. Entities such as ultraviolet light and Hertzian waves are invisible and intangible. Still, they produce observable effects on the world around them, and from these effects, we can infer the nature of the forces which produce them. It is the same with literature which we cannot read in its original language. Such literature produces certain observable effects upon the translator and from the nature of these effects, we can infer the nature of their cause. It will be possible to



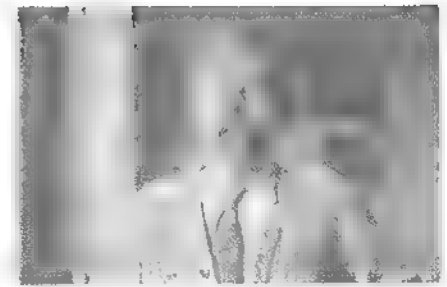
Aldous Huxley

draw a reasonably accurate inference from a good translation than from a bad one. But even the best translation permits only inferential knowledge, never of direct acquaintance with the spirit and essence of the original. In most cases,

the substitution of Inferential knowledge for direct acquaintance results in a loss to the reader. Though not always,'—wrote renowned author Aldous Huxley.

Huxley dwells on the challenges of understanding literature through translations and the complexities of portraying virtuous characters in fiction. He begins by drawing a parallel between the process of understanding works of literature in translation and the way we infer the existence of invisible forces like ultraviolet light based on their effects. He argues that while translations offer indirect knowledge of a script, they cannot replicate the experience of directly reading the original text. The quality of the translation influences how accurately we can present the essence of the original work.

Huxley uses Russian writer Maxim Gorky's works to illustrate his point. (Gorky was nominated for the Nobel Prize five times but was never awarded one). He explains that Gorky's writing is difficult to translate because much of its depth lies in the texture of his language, which cannot be fully captured in another language. For Gorky, the meaning often arises from shifts in tone and style within his prose,



Maxim Gorky

from brutal colloquialism to moments of lyrical intensity.

Huxley dwells into a wider rumination on the portrayal of virtuous characters in literature. He points out that many writers have found it difficult to depict goodness in a complex, intelligent and grown-up manner. Characters who are virtuous in literature are often portrayed with flaws—such as ignorance, childishness or social naivety—because a perfect, intelligent and virtuous character would be uncomfortable for readers, who might feel inferior in comparison. By portraying virtuous characters with defects, writers allow readers to maintain a sense of superiority.

The act of translating, especially for a writer like Gorky, inevitably distorts certain subtleties, particularly the use of verbal texture to convey complex ideas.

Huxley identifies a key aspect of Gorky's writing: his reliance on

the surface quality of his language to express deeper themes, particularly the tension between the brutality of life and the potential for beauty and goodness beneath it. Gorky's unique stylistic approach includes sudden transitions from harsh, colloquial language to lyrical and elevated expressions. This modulation, though powerful in the original Russian, is difficult to capture in translation, but even poor translations reveal Gorky's expressive intent. Gorky is notable for creating good characters who are not idealised, but rather flawed in some way. These characters,

like Gorky's 'hermit', may be well-meaning but naïve, uneducated or socially unaware. Huxley observes that this difficulty in portraying virtuous characters reflects a broader challenge in literature.

In summary, Huxley's insights underscore the challenge of translating not only language but also the unique texture and subtleties of a writer's style. While some of Gorky's thematic and artistic intentions can be inferred from translations, the richness of his original expression remains elusive, highlighting the complexities inherent in literary translation. ●

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Trio of Divine Trees

B. L. Razdan

Troika, Triad, *Tikdi* in common parlance, but *Triveni* in the Sanatan tradition refers to the association of three most sacred trees in the Sanatan pantheon for the simple reason that the trinity of Gods (Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh) are believed to be residing in them. Triveni trees are associated with divine, positive energy.

Peepal (पीपल): This is the most worshipped tree in India, which in Sanskrit is known as 'Ashvattha'. The peepal tree is also known as the Bodhi tree or tree of enlightenment as it is believed that the Buddha attained enlightenment under it. This is the reason the

peepal tree is sacred to Buddhists. Also, the present Kali Yuga began with the death of Lord Krishna that had taken place under this very tree. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna tells Arjuna, "Among the trees, I am the peepal."

मूलतः ब्रह्म रूपाय मध्यतो विष्णु रुपिण ।
अग्रतः शिव रूपाय अश्वत्थाय नमो नमः ॥

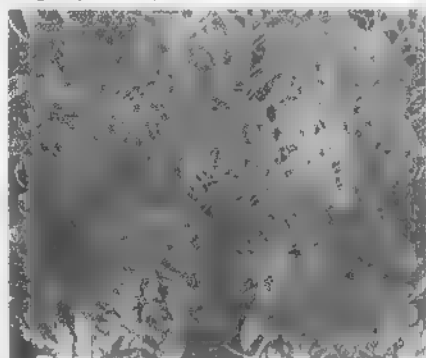
In Hinduism, it is believed that the roots of the peepal tree are Brahma, the trunk is Vishnu and the leaves are Shiva. That is why the 'Ashwattha' (Peepal) tree has to be bowed down to (Purana). A red thread or cloth is tied around the peepal tree for worship, so cutting it down is considered inauspicious.



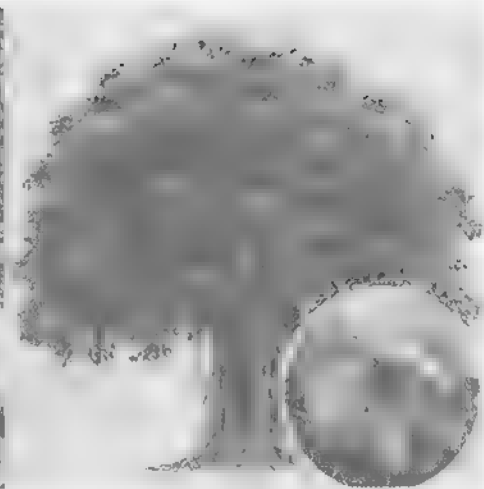
Peepal Tree

Banyan (बरगद) : It is believed that the three gods, Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva and Lord Brahma, are symbolised by the Banyan tree. Mostly childless couples worship the banyan tree and it is not to be cut. In most Hindu cultures, this tree represents life and fertility.

Neem (नीम): Many medical benefits are associated with the neem tree and because of this, it is highly respected in India. It



Neem Tree



Banyan Tree

supposed to be an expression of Goddess Durga. In Bengal, the tree is believed to be a place of habitation of 'Shitala', the great Pox-mother who can cause and cure disease. To cure pox, neem leaves are rubbed on the body and by offering a prayer to her. It is also believed that smoke produced by burning neem leaves keeps the evil spirits away from you and your home. Each of the three trees is beneficial in its own way, be it for medicinal purposes or for puja.

It is said that no one knows the antiquity of Akshayvat, Panchavat, Vanshivat, Gayavat, and Siddhavat. The above five *Vatas* have been classified as sacred *Vatas* around the world. The sacred Akshayvat is found in Prayag, Panchavat in Nasik, Vanshivat in Vrindavan, Gayavat in

Gaya, and Siddhavat in Ujjain.

तह पुनि संधु समुक्षिपन आसन।
बैठे वटतर. करि कमलासन॥

Many virtuous seekers, rishis, or even deities have witnessed Lord Vishnu's presence in the banyan tree. (*Ramcharit Manas*).

When there was talk of planting some trees at the grounds of the police post at Malarampura in Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan, constable Vindo Legha knew exactly what he had to do. He planted a sapling each of vad (banyan), neem and peepal in a triangle. The three trees planted together in this fashion is called Triveni; as they grow, their branches entwine. "Planting the Triveni is part of our traditions and associated with our faith," said the policeman. "They emit a lot of oxygen into the environment."



Triveni Tree

Not just in Hanumangarh, but across Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab, and lately even in Madhya Pradesh, there are many like Legha who enthusiastically plant the Triveni, keeping the tradition alive. In Punjab, the Triveni is grown in *deras* and temples, whereas in Haryana and Rajasthan they can be spotted in many common spaces in villages, including schools, temples, *dharamshalas* and crematoria. Triveni trees are revered due to the belief that the trinity of Hindu gods—Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva—reside in them and are associated with divine, positive energy. Old, full-grown Triveni trees can provide a large canopy under their interlocking branches full of nesting birds for people to gather underneath and are called 'Nature's Dharamshala'.

Himmataram Bhambhu, a Padma Shri awardee from Nagaur, Rajasthan, popularly known as the 'Tree Man', said, "We believe that these three trees are the abodes of God. They are held in respect. And they are of special importance to the environment because of the long lifespan of these trees. Once we plant them, they give oxygen for hundreds of years. The peepal, or Bodhi tree, can live up to a thousand years."

Antaryami Kaushik, Assistant Professor of Botany at Government College, Lunkaransar (Bikaner), said that neem trees have been observed to live up to a maximum period of hundred years, while peepal and banyan trees can thrive for hundreds of years. These two trees also have a special property that gives them the ability to release oxygen throughout 24 hours of the day, unlike other plants that generally have a 12-hour cycle where they alternatively release oxygen and carbon dioxide. "So they are able to release more oxygen than other trees," he said. "That's why our sages said these trees are holy, the abode of the Gods. And our people have been planting these trees for centuries."

The religiously-inclined consider the act of planting and caring for Triveni trees as a yagna, an act of worship. And because of its significance to the community, a Triveni tree is never cut down. Pandit Satyapal Parashar, a spiritual orator or *bhagwat katha vachak*, said, "Peepal, banyan and neem have scientific and spiritual significance. Our ancestors protected them as living forms of God. Planting, watering and

nourishing these trees is a great virtue. That is why the tradition of planting the Triveni is still alive, despite the challenges faced by the environment today. I travel around many villages and towns and when I see the Triveni everywhere, I feel very happy."

Communities who live around the Triveni widely believe and know of the many medicinal properties of the three trees. The bark of the peepal is beneficial in curing ulcers and throat inflammation; its roots can be used for easing arthritis; its leaves, for setting right constipation; the seeds, for removing urinary disorders, and ripe fruits, for coping with heart diseases. The neem has traditionally been used to cure itching, skin diseases, diabetes, intestinal worms, diseases of teeth and gums, etc. The banyan tree's bark, milk, leaves, fruits and roots have the potential to cure hundreds of ailments such as cough, cold, blood vomiting, menstrual disorders, and diseases involving the ears, stomach, teeth, gums, urinary tract, skin, etc.

Satyavan, a government teacher known as 'Triveni Baba', has been campaigning to plant trees in Haryana for the past 27 years. He

has planted more than 40 lakh saplings, and among them are 50,000 Triveni trees. "There is no village in Haryana where the community has not planted these sacred trees. People still follow the age-old traditions around the Triveni," he said. "Neem, peepal and banyan are huge trees and a large number of birds take shelter in them. These birds eat their seeds and carry them far and wide. Under favourable circumstances, these seeds can germinate, grow and become giant trees themselves over the years." Baba Satyavan, a resident of Bisalwas village in Haryana's Bhiwani district, said his campaign has been influenced by the philosophical ideas of Swami Vivekananda. In 1994, he planted Triveni saplings in Khejarli village in Rajasthan, famous for being the site of the massacre in 1730 of 363 people of the Bishnoi community. Led by a woman named Amrita Devi, now revered

as 'Mother', hundreds of people sacrificed their lives to protect the felling of Khejri trees for a new royal palace.

Recognising the rich folk traditions and scientific merits, the forest departments in Haryana and Rajasthan have been giving importance and priority to the Triveni under their plantation programmes. Rajasthan's Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, K C Meena, said, "Our society has been protecting the environment through traditional methods since ancient times. Now, while planting saplings in the state, the Forest Department gives preference to the Triveni. There are two factors behind this. One is the common people's reverence towards the Triveni trees. The other is their long lifespan. Peepal and neem trees live for hundreds of years. There is no limit to the age of the banyan." So be inspired to plant as many *trivenis* as possible! ●

SWEET THOUGHT

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"One who is Virtuous
and Wise, Just and Merciful,
is a true Human"

- Lord Sri Rama

Power of Positive Thinking

K. R. K. Moorthy

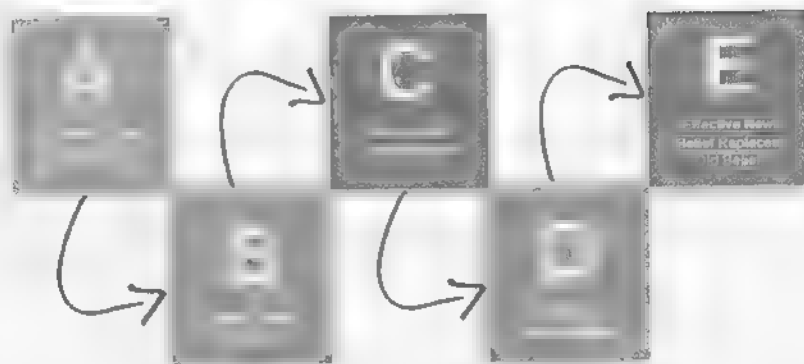
Positive thinking is a type of emotional and mental attitude that is developed by expecting and focusing on the good at any given time. It means to approach good and bad things in life with the hope that everything will turn out well. It does not mean avoiding or ignoring all the bad things. Instead, it involves making the best of bad situations, trying to see the best in every situation and in people, and viewing your abilities in a positive framework. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to treat pleasure and pain, gain and loss, and victory and defeat

alike, with the same frame of mind. The Lord was trying to motivate a diffident and negative-thinking Arjuna into developing a positive attitude and to do his duty as a warrior in the battlefield. Researchers believe that those who have a positive mindset are better protected against the effects of stress, have a better emotional balance and show improvement in health/ well-being. The idea that our thoughts can influence our happiness is central to many philosophies and modern psychological practices such as positive psychology and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

The relationship between thinking and happiness involves mental, emotional, and physiological processes that work together to enhance well-being. Our thoughts shape our perception and influence our emotions and ultimately determine our overall sense of well-being. Our minds are constantly processing information, interpreting events and assigning meaning to how they affect our lives. The internal process plays a significant role in shaping our reality and impacting our happiness depending on the way we interpret the events. The power of our thoughts shows how we behave in a difficult situation. The power of our positive thinking improves our perception of reality. Positive thinking can help regulate our emotions more effectively, leading to greater emotional stability and resilience. If we constantly dwell on negative thoughts, such as self-criticism, fear or pessimism, we are more likely to experience prolonged negative emotions like anxiety, anger and sadness. This can lead to patterns of avoidance, withdrawal or unhealthy coping methods.

The main traits associated with the habit of positive thinking include:

- ◆ Having an optimistic view of every situation, believing that there is always 'a silver lining in every cloud'.
- ◆ Willingness to take chances instead of assuming your efforts will not pay off.
- ◆ Accepting the fact that all situations will not be favourable to you, but making the best out of them.
- ◆ The resilience to face and bounce back from adverse situations and disappointments, instead of giving up.
- ◆ Being grateful and appreciative of the good things in life.
- ◆ Training the mind to become conscious and aware, and enhancing the ability to concentrate and focus.
- ◆ Being honourable, righteous and straightforward instead of deceitful and selfish.
- ◆ Being satisfied with what you get even if it falls short of your expectations.
- ◆ Motivating and complimenting people around you and being friendly with all, including strangers.
- ◆ Getting up every time you fall, without losing hope.



- ◆ Not letting people discourage you with their negative thoughts, but being positive and cheerful all the time.
- ◆ Accepting that negative thinking and emotions are a part of life because they help to sharpen your focus on dangers, threats and vulnerabilities.
- ◆ Thinking of a bright future and not a bleak one. This is vital for survival in life.
- ◆ Not getting annoyed or frustrated with petty things.
- ◆ Avoiding setting impossible standards.
- ◆ Focusing on your strengths, like compassion, methodicalness, discipline and creativity.

Positive thinking gives you all the opportunities whereas a negative mind finds fault with everything.

There are activities and games that develop a positive mindset.

Listen to your favourite music, which has the ability to change your mood. Remember to breathe deeply and slowly, and transport your mind to a calm place. Do not live on fixed standards or a label. Be authentic. Step out of your comfort zone and embrace change. Eat healthful food and avoid negative words like "I can't", "I won't", etc.

The ABC+DE Model: According to Martin Seligman (Director of Positive Psychology Center, Pennsylvania), optimism can be cultivated by challenging the negative thoughts that arise in our minds. This 'learned optimism' can be beneficial to feel happier and healthier, to release stress and increase performance and motivation to achieve your goals. The ABC model, originally developed by Albert Ellis (American psychologist and

psychotherapist) and later modified by Martin Seligman, is an approach to help us think more optimistically. This technique, found in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), is an approach in restructuring beliefs through self-awareness. Seligman added the components 'Disputation' (D) and 'Energisation' (E) to the original ABC model in order not only to be aware of our thinking patterns, but also to be able to overcome pessimistic thinking and cultivate optimistic outlook. Here, 'A' stands for Adversity (be specific and accurate in your description of Adversity); 'B' for Beliefs (write down your Beliefs regarding Adversity); 'C' for Consequences (list all the emotions and actions that would result from your Beliefs); 'D' for Disputation (develop a more optimistic alternate Belief about Adversity); and 'E' for Energisation (write down how the Disputation changes your energy and behaviour).

Larry Alton, a business consultant, lists seven practical tips to help you to be more positive: 1) Start the day with a positive affirmation. 2) Focus on good things, however small they are. 3) Find humour even in bad

situations. 4) Learn from failures. 5) Transform negative self-talk to positive self-talk. 6) Focus on the present instead of getting mired in the past or losing your way in the future. 7) Find positive friends, mentors and co-workers to support and encourage you.

Finally, by surrounding ourselves with positivity through supportive relationships, uplifting environments, or inspiring people and media, we can reinforce our commitment to positive thinking. We can thus create a life that is more aligned with our values, goals and our desire to achieve happiness. The beliefs we hold about ourselves and the world around us tend to manifest in our reality. If you believe you are capable of achieving goals, you are more likely to act in ways that make your goal achievable. On the other hand, if you think you are going to fail, you may unconsciously sabotage your efforts, thus resulting in the very outcome you feared. According to the theory of aerodynamics, the bumble bee cannot fly because of its body weight and smaller wing span. But the bumble bee flies because it 'thinks' it 'can'!

How Grandparents' Education Shapes Our Health

Dr. A. P. Jayaraman

When we think of the factors that influence our health, we often focus on what we can control: eating well, exercising regularly, and visiting the doctor. Yet, a fascinating new study suggests that one factor might be beyond our immediate grasp—and it lies in the past, within the educational backgrounds of our grandparents. The study, conducted by researchers at Drexel University, along with teams from the University of California and the University of North Carolina, highlights an intriguing link between a grandparent's level of education and their grandchildren's biological

age. In essence, the academic achievements of our grandparents might not only shape our intellectual pursuits but could also impact our health at the cellular level.

Education and the Biological Clock

The recent study examined data spanning three generations: the education levels of grandparents, parents, and health information from their children. What the researchers found is remarkable—grandchildren of college-educated grandparents showed a slower biological ageing process than those whose grandparents did not attend college. This study was fascinating because it employed something called 'epigenetic

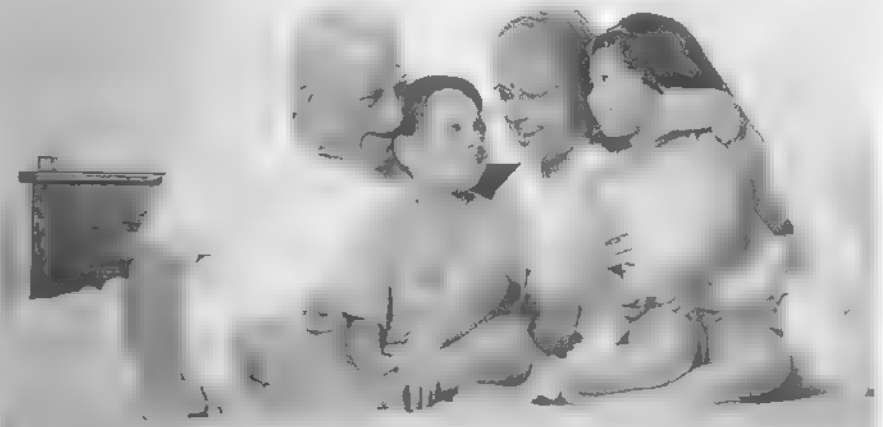
clocks', which measure biological ageing by analysing DNA methylation—the chemical modifications that occur as we age. These modifications provide a snapshot of an individual's 'real' age, based not on the number of years lived but on the condition of their cells and overall health.

What is especially intriguing is that these grandchildren had epigenetic ages that were lower than their chronological age. In simpler terms, the biological clocks of these grandchildren were ticking more slowly, potentially making them healthier in the long run. It seems that education does not just open doors to opportunities; it may also pass down health benefits across generations.

The Role of Epigenetics

The science behind this research revolves around epigenetics, the study of how environmental and social factors can influence gene expression without changing the underlying DNA sequence. DNA methylation is one key mechanism through which these influences are exerted. Methylation patterns change as we age, and these patterns can be influenced by both genetic factors and external conditions, such as socioeconomic status, education, and exposure to stress.

In the study, researchers used saliva samples from grandchildren to analyse their DNA methylation patterns. They found that grandchildren whose grandparents had attended college tended to



show slower epigenetic ageing compared to those whose grandparents did not pursue higher education. This suggests that the benefits of education might extend far beyond intellectual development, influencing health at a molecular level.

Intergenerational Influence on Health

Dr. Agus Surachman, lead author of the study, emphasises that the results build on a long-standing understanding in public health: social and economic factors, such as education, play a critical role in shaping an individual's health trajectory. However, this study adds a new dimension by showing that these influences reach back not just one, but two generations, extending from parents to children, and even from grandparents to grandchildren.

This intergenerational transmission of health advantages may not be as surprising when we consider how other life factors, like childhood adversity or trauma, can also influence health outcomes across generations. Past studies have shown that children of Holocaust survivors or survivors of the Tutsi genocide exhibit health effects linked to their

parents' traumatic experiences. However, this new research brings attention to a more positive form of intergenerational transmission—education as a vehicle for promoting long-term health.

Education, it seems, is not just a tool for social mobility; it could be a cornerstone of intergenerational well-being.

How Maternal Health Plays a Role

In addition to examining the impact of grandparental education, the researchers also looked at the role of parental health, particularly maternal health, on this relationship. They found that a mother's health could partially mediate the link between grandparental education and the biological age of the grandchild. Factors such as maternal BMI (Body mass index), cardiovascular health, and inflammation (measured by C-reactive protein) helped explain some of the connection. However, even with these adjustments, the influence of grandparents' education remained significant.

This reinforces the idea that health is shaped by a complex interplay of genetic, social and environmental factors. Our own health, as a mother and a grandmother, might play a



role in influencing the well-being of our grandsons. But it also suggests that, in addition to focusing on our own health, we should value the health and education of the generations that came before us, as they too have left a lasting imprint.

Beyond the Biology:

The Power of Legacy

This study also serves as a reminder that we often emphasise individual responsibility when it comes to health. However, as Dr. Surachman points out, health is far more complex than that. Many factors influencing our well-being are beyond our immediate

control, such as inherited epigenetic traits and the educational background of those who came before us. This awareness calls for more compassion, not only towards others but towards ourselves, as we acknowledge the long-term influence of the generations that have preceded us.

This research offers more than just an insight into how our bodies age. It invites us to rethink the value of education—not just for personal growth, but for the collective well-being of future generations. Our pursuit of knowledge, our decisions to prioritise education, and our commitment to lifelong learning are all investments not only in ourselves but in the health of those who come after us. The legacy of education is not just something we inherit—it is something we can pass on, nurturing future generations in ways we are only beginning to understand. ●

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"No matter how wise a person is, if he devoid of Dharma, then his destruction is certain."

- Lord Sri Rama

Autism and Its Awareness

C. K. Subramaniam

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (which is a book published by the American Psychiatric Association), is a neurodevelopmental disorder associated with symptoms that include 'persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts' and 'restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests, or activities'. These symptoms result from underlying challenges in a child's ability to take in the world through his (or

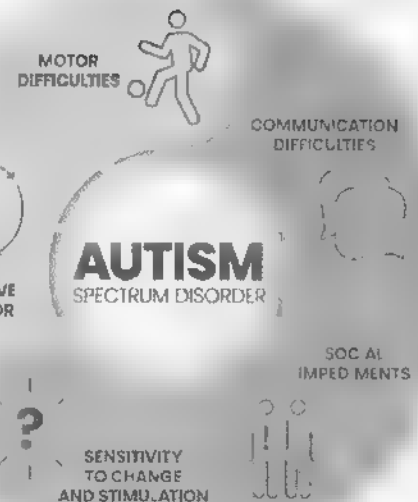
her) senses, and to use his (or her) body and thoughts to respond to it. When these challenges are significant, they interfere with a child's ability to grow and learn, and may lead to a diagnosis of autism.

Autism is no longer classified as a single disorder, but rather as an entire spectrum ranging in severity. Autism is the core of all of these syndromes, with its features being prevalent to varying degrees throughout, and includes such disorders such as Rett Syndrome and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (CDD). One of the most

commonly known disorders on the list, outside of Autism itself, is Asperger's. Asperger's Syndrome is signified by the presence of Autism symptoms with no impairment of language development. With World Autism Day on April 2 and Autistic Pride Day on June 18, we remind people to be involved with persons suffering from such a syndrome and make sure that people are aware of such a disorder on an ongoing basis

A child may develop unusual or concerning behaviours in response to these difficulties or differences. For example, a child may be so under-reactive to sensation that he/ she spins in circles in an attempt to increase his/ her sensory input; another child, overwhelmed by the confusing information he receives about the world, may withdraw, finding security in lining up his cars over and over again.

A child receives a diagnosis based on observation of the behaviours outlined above. However, though a child may share a common diagnosis with other children, each has a unique pattern



of development and functioning. Each child is unique in his/ her processing of sensory and other information, and his/ her motor planning (the ability to plan and carry out actions). Some children are over-reactive to sensations, such as touch and sound, while others are under-reactive. Some children have relatively strong auditory memories, and can memorise entire scripts; others have relatively strong visual memories. Some children are able to plan and carry out a number of actions in a row, such as going upstairs, getting a toy, and bringing it back down, while others are only able to carry out



one action at a time, becoming very fragmented in their behaviour.

In addition to differences in sensory processing and motor planning, children differ in their basic mastery of the foundations for relating, communicating, and thinking. Some children with ASD can form relationships and engage in two-way communication, while others appear to be very self-absorbed and aimless. Some children can focus and attend to and engage with others, but can only participate in a back-and-forth flow of communication in a limited way.

finding it difficult to use language meaningfully or connect ideas together for logical and reflective thinking. Other children show some mastery of the basics, and the ability to engage in more complex communication as well as the ability to create ideas and use them logically, but they may be very limited in their capacity to apply these abilities to a broad range of situations. Therefore, while some children exhibit common symptoms that lead to a diagnosis of an autistic spectrum disorder, their individual patterns—and therefore their developmental journeys—are quite varied. ●

Rules & Remedies of Sleep

Avani M.

Sleep is important for brain functions, including how nerve cells (neurons) communicate with one another. The brain and the body stay remarkably active while we sleep and play a house-keeping role by removing toxins in the brain. Good sleep helps heart health, promotes growth, supports weight management, reduces the risk of injury, helps combat germs and keeps the immune system stronger, increases attention span, and boosts memory and learning.

10 3 2 1 0 Rule:

- ◆ 10 hours before bed: No caffeine.

- ◆ 3 hours before bed: No food or alcohol.
- ◆ 2 hours before bed: No more work.
- ◆ 1 hour before bed: No more electronic devices. (Shut off all phones, TVs and computers.)
- ◆ 0: The number of times you hit snooze in the morning.

We need 8 hours of sleep per day. It can take up to 4 days to recover from 1 hour of lost sleep and 9 days to completely eliminate sleep debt.

Side-effects of Disturbed or Inadequate Sleep

Inadequate sleep increases the risk of chronic conditions which

has severe consequences on both our physical and mental health.

Not getting enough sleep makes us more emotionally unstable. Lack of sleep can cause very strong emotions, such as extreme sadness or anger. Disturbed sleep affects our emotional and physical health, leading to a negative effect on our memory, concentration and mood, and increases the risk of depression, obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. The side-effects of not sleeping for 24 hours are irritability, drowsiness, impaired judgement, short-term memory loss, increased blood pressure, etc.

Remedies

- ◆ **Wake up early:** It helps regulate our body's biological clock and establish a regular sleep schedule. It helps in increasing one's productivity in the morning as we have a fresh and clear mind.
- ◆ **Exercise daily:** Physical activity regulates body temperature, changes the levels of chemicals in the brain like serotonin, endorphins, stress hormones which in turn helps us get good sleep.
- ◆ **Eat the right foods:** Consuming late-night snacks, sugar,

caffeine and alcohol hinders sleep. Manganese, omega-3 fatty acids, iron, vitamin D, zinc and fibre-rich foods help in secreting more of melatonin which improves sleep. Green leafy vegetables, legumes, nuts and whole grains aid in the production of serotonin, which aids sleep.

- ◆ **Avoid heavy meals before going to bed:** Large, heavy meals close to bedtime can lead to discomfort and indigestion, making it challenging to fall asleep.
- ◆ **Keep yourself hydrated:** Dehydration affects the production of melatonin which makes it harder to fall asleep.
- ◆ **Establish a bedtime routine:** Engage in activities such as reading, take a warm bath, or practise relaxation techniques to promote a peaceful night's sleep.
- ◆ **Ensure a sleep-conducive environment:** Keep the room cool, dark and quiet to facilitate falling asleep and staying asleep.

Tip: Consuming warm milk with turmeric + *ashwagandha* (Indian ginseng) / cinnamon or almonds at night helps you get good sleep faster! ●



Power of Bindi

A bindi is a traditional religious symbol in Indian culture, where women wear a red dot on their forehead and men typically wear bindis for religious ceremonies. These red dots or bindis are placed directly over the third eye to represent spiritual enlightenment. Traditionally, bindis are made with an ink-like mixture of turmeric and slaked lime; however, reusable stick-on versions have become popular in recent years. Today, bindis come in many sizes, shapes and colours, and can be reused.

The word 'bindi' comes from the Sanskrit word *bindu*, which means drop or particle. Bindis are also called *kumkum*, *sindoor*, *teep*, *tikli* and *bottu*. In Hinduism, the colour red represents love, honour and prosperity, making it a culturally significant colour for marriage, a relationship that is meant to last for a lifetime.



Hindus often mark their foreheads before practising yoga, praying, or entering a temple or some other sacred space. The bindi is said to help open their third eye, allowing them to perceive the world in a new light and remind them of their life's purpose.

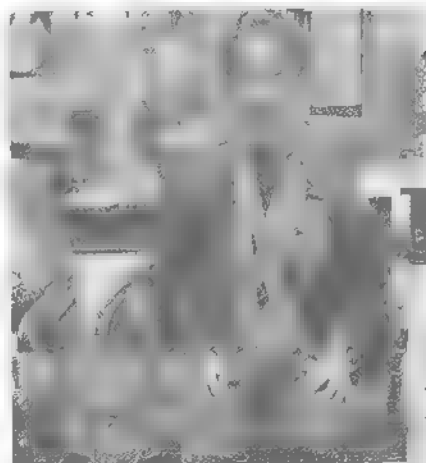
Some Hindus frown against glamorous, fashion-forward bindis and prefer the traditional application. However, they are becoming more widely accepted, and many women prefer using a stick-on application for daily wear.

Labourer's Daughter becomes World Champion

With talent, enthusiasm and a fire in the belly, anyone can become a champion. When Kasturi Rajamurty won a gold medal in powerlifting at the WPPL World Cup in Russia, she had come a long way from a life of penury to this triumph.

When the 21-year old Kasturi heard the word 'tandoori' three times during the results of the 48-kg category powerlifting at the WPPL World Cup in Novosibirsk, Russia, in November 2024, she was almost in tears. She did not understand Russian and thought that she had lost the championship till she found everyone staring at her. She had just won the gold medal in this category and was handed the national flag by a team-mate.

Her return to India with the gold medal caused a sense of celebration while she was received by the media at Delhi. What she said was lost in translation as the next day's newspapers announced: 'Porter's daughter wins gold medal.' In Tamil, when she said 'My mother works as a coolie', it meant that she is a daily wage labourer at a construction site. But the Delhi



media took the Hindi meaning of the term 'coolie' literally.

Kasturi looks thin, petite and pretty. She studied at a Tamil medium government school in Cheyyar, a town in Tiruvannamalai district of rural Tamil Nadu. She started playing football from the time she was in class seven. By the time she reached the ninth standard, she was in the school's football team and playing for the state.

It wasn't easy for her as her father suffered from mental illness while her mother was a daily wage earner. She has two older sisters. Her family was hesitant to send her to a city at such a young age, but she was determined and knew she could look after herself.

"I did not even have enough money to pay for my food, but the head of the department of Maths at Ethiraj College paid for my food, which was Rs. 3,000 a month, for six months. I graduated in B.Sc. (Mathematics)."

The Street Lights club also sponsored her. In April 2023, she went home for the holidays. Her mother was 52 years old then and carrying bricks, gravel and cement with ease. "I realised that I had the same genes as her and if she could do it, why not me?" says Kasturi.

Her perseverance paid off as she found a coach on Instagram. She asked for special training and he obliged. She joined in May 2023, and would go for football practice in the

morning and train for powerlifting in the evening. Her training helped her win a district tournament in October, in the 48-kg category.

In January 2024, she won the district championship in Chennai, and also won the university championship. Two months later, she got an offer letter to enter an international tournament in Europe. A month later, she got an invite for the World Championship in Russia.

The powerlifting federation in Russia received her and her uncle (who had accompanied her) at the airport and took them to their place of stay. She came away from the place with a gold medal, a mantel piece and a certificate!

FarmDidi and Pickles

The network of 'Didis' in Maharashtra who make pickles and chutneys for FarmDidi (a food-tech startup) number 2,000 today and the innovative venture received a notable boost when in early 2024, on Season 3 of *Shark Tank*, two sharks (or angel investors) agreed to invest Rs. 1 crore for 10 per cent equity.

The fascinating journey of Manjari Sharma, founder of FarmDidi, began in Bahadurgarh,

a town in Jhajjar district of eastern Haryana. From there, she went to New Delhi, Pune, Kolkata, Patna, Begusarai (east of Patna in Bihar), Khagaria (also east of Patna in Bihar), Bengaluru, Gurugram and finally back to Pune again.

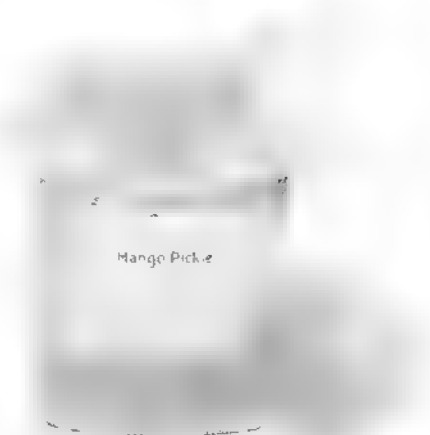
From a young age itself, Manjari showed signs of leadership—she graduated from Bal Bharti School as a house captain, where she had been taking part in inter-school debates at the regional level. After

completing a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Ramjas College, Delhi, Manjari found a job in Infosys, Pune, then Wipro, when she decided to do her MBA and got admission into the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta in 2014. After she completed her MBA, Manjari joined the global management consulting firm Kearney in Gurugram.

Anukrit, her husband, worked briefly for the Tata Administrative Services and later for the French oil company TotalEnergies in Mumbai. Manjari often made trips to the US, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Europe and the Middle East. But she felt that the typical corporate life was not for her. She wanted to help rural women earn some extra income so that they could send their children to better schools.

In 2019, Manjari took leave from Kearney and took up residence for five to six months in the village of Gadana in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district and during that period "participated in every village meeting" as well as spent time speaking to all the villagers to "really understand what was happening on the ground".

Many months of research and investigation showed her that a



food business was the way to go. Most village women had excellent cooking skills. As Manjari says, "The food of rural India is amazing; it is very tasty in the way it is prepared and it's farm to plate." Manjari felt that these edible items could possibly find a market in urban India.

Pickles prepared by women in rural Maharashtra are different—they are very fresh and quite tasty. But would they appeal to an urban palate or pan-Indian taste buds? Indians living in the cities prefer pickles that have less salt, very little oil and nothing too spicy. Further, a Maharashtrian-style pickle might not work in, say, a Chennai market.

There was also the matter of hygiene. Because most cooking in rural homes is done at floor level

or outside the home, it was important to ensure that no impurities got into the pickle.

Manjari quit her job at Kearney in November 2020, Anukrit joined her a year later, and in 2021, after the worst phase of the Covid pandemic had ended, FarmDidi began.

Manjari and her partners streamlined a special process by which pickles would be made for FarmDidi. They would supply the ingredients or premixes as per a 'formula' which they felt matched typical Indian consumer preferences. This formula had been worked out based on inputs from the 'didis'.

The 30 *didis*, who had been carefully selected to join FarmDidi, would come to the Pune headquarters to receive training in hygiene, which involved the use of gloves, masks and hair nets. When they returned, they would set up their own pickle or masala

kitchen and establish a routine, whereby they would touch base in Pune every morning to show, via daily pictures, that they were following the established FarmDidi SOPs that ensured quality, uniformity and cleanliness. Audits were performed regularly too.

The years of meticulous research paid off, as both the concept and its translation to reality proved.

The owners of FarmDidi plan to soon automate the process such that by scanning the QR code on a bottle of FarmDidi pickle, the consumer will get to know the name of the Didi who put together the pickle, details of the lab test reports and kitchen hygiene, and pictures of the actual process of pickle-making.

Manjari feels a sense of contentment. Her mission to empower a million rural women is on track.

(Compiled by Dr. Veena Adige)

SWEET THOUGHT

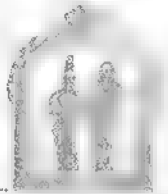
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"No one can change the direction of the wind. But one can adjust the sails to reach the destination."

- Lord Sri Rama

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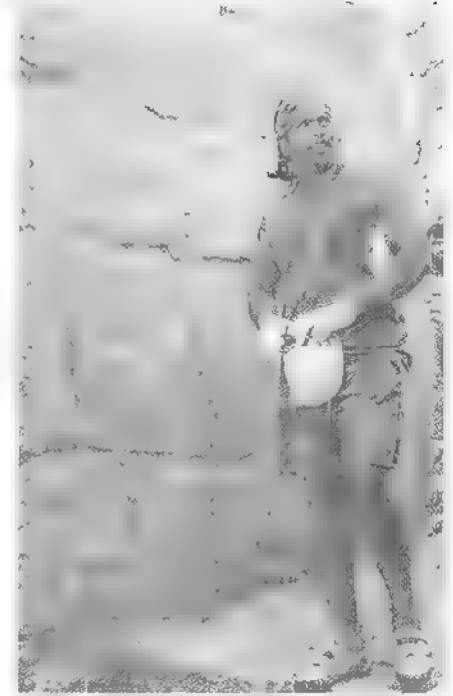
Monkey King

Jyoti Raj is an Indian free solo climber from Chitradurga, Karnataka.

Known as 'Kothi Raja' or 'Monkey King', Raj is famous for scaling the Chitradurga Fort without a safety harness. He does not climb for sport, but to entertain the visitors to the fort. He is also the only person to have scaled Karnataka's highest waterfall, the 830-foot Jog falls, climbing against the flow.

On September 13, 2013, he free soloed the clock tower at Moorosavir Math in Hubli in just over 15 minutes. He did not use any harness, but used chalk for grip. He made his debut as an actor in Sandalwood (Kannada film industry) with the 2014 film *Jyothi Alias Kothi Raja*. He has been called upon numerous times to rescue or retrieve the bodies of people who have fallen down Jog Falls, and on a rescue operation in 2018 he got stuck in a gorge overnight.

As Jyoti Raj narrates his story in the documentary 'From Suicidal to Scaling Walls: India's Amazing



'Monkey King', he recalls that when he was three years old he got lost in a temple in Tamil Nadu. (He does not remember how he ended up in that village.) He reveals that a man took care of him but at the same time abused him, asking him why he was even alive!

Abashed and hurt, he questioned himself about living in such a world. He left the place and wanted to climb a rock so as to fall

down and die. He reached a fort and planned to jump from the rock, but there was no route for climbing. It was then that he saw a monkey climbing it and decided that he would do it the same way. After putting in a lot of effort, he reached the top and saw the tourists cheering for him. The tourists asked him if he was a world champion in climbing. Overwhelmed by their love

and response, he realised that such adventures make it easy to carve a place for oneself in other people's hearts. This man has not only done this but also made a name for himself in the world as he is among the world's top three solo climbers. He has been injured many times, and has hurt his hand, lower back and head. But "I've never let my heart break," says Jyoti Raj.

Three Short Stories

Here are three amusing short stories that you can share with everyone as they are full of meaning and worth remembering!

Profound

I saw a little kid eating ice-cream in the life. Out of concern, I casually said, "It is such a cold day; you will get sick eating that!"

The kid replied, "My grandma lived to be 103."

I asked, "From eating ice-cream?"

He said, "No, because she never meddled in other people's business!"

How profound! I finally understand why I am unnecessarily meddling.

Exhausted!

Scammers are everywhere these days. I recently came across a news story about people's savings

mysteriously disappearing—tens of thousands of dollars gone without a trace

Panicking, I rushed to the bank on my bike, inserted my card, entered my password, and checked my balance. Thankfully, my Rs 8,000 was still there. I breathed a sigh of relief.

Whew! That was nerve-wracking! I swear I am never watching the news again—too stressful!

As I left the bank, I was even more exhausted: my 8000 rupees was safe, but my bike was gone.

Power of Restraint

A young lady boarded a train and saw a man sitting in her seat. She politely checked her ticket

and said, "Sir, I think you are in my seat."

The man pulled out his ticket and shouted, "Look closely! This is my seat! Are you blind?!"

The lady carefully checked his ticket and stopped arguing. She quietly stood beside him.

After the train started moving, the girl leaned over and said softly,

"Sir, you are not in the wrong seat, but you are on the wrong train. This is heading to Shanghai, and your ticket is for Harbin."

There is a kind of restraint that leaves people regretting their actions. If yelling solved everything, donkeys would have ruled the world long ago.

(Source. WhatsApp)

Stag Calling Contest

There are different types of contests. Here is a new one...

German hunters tried to convince the jury at a national stag calling championship that they could imitate a bellowing red deer most realistically.

This unique tradition goes back hundreds of years and was initially aimed at feigning a stag's rival during the rutting season so that the deer comes out. The trick gave hunters a chance to better assess the stag before deciding whether to shoot it.

The competition took place recently at the Jagd and Hund, or hunting and dog, trade fair in the city of Dortmund. There were no animals, only bellowing men wearing traditional hunters' garb including green hats with a tuft of chamois hair.

The hunters used specially made ox horns, triton snail shells, glass cylinders, the hollow stems of the giant hogweed, and a number of artificially produced instruments to amplify the sound and resonance.

A stag's vocalisations are not only very diverse, but also vary according to age, state of mind and duration of the rut, during which they become increasingly hoarse, as well as the mood of the herd, according to the organisers.



In Dortmund, the hunters were asked to compete in three disciplines: the call of the old, searching stag, the call of the dominant male in a pack of does, and the calling duel between two equally strong stags at the height of the rut. The members of the jury listened with closed eyes to make

sure nothing would distract them from the sound.

Wenzel, a hunter from the small village of Nüdlingen in Bavaria, won the title for the fifth time in a row and will participate in the European Stag Calling Championships, which will take place in Lithuania in October.

Story

Change Yourself

There was a king who was troubled by severe eye pain. He consulted many physicians, took heavy loads of drugs and medicines. But the ache persisted with even greater vigour than before.

At last a monk was called who immediately diagnosed his problem and said, for some time the king should only look at and concentrate on green colours and not let his eyes fall on any other colours.

The ministers got together a group of painters and purchased barrels of green colour and directed that every object the king's eye was likely to fall on, be painted in green colour, so that the king does not see any other colour just as the monk had directed.

When the monk came to visit him after a few days, the king's servants ran with buckets of green paints and poured on him since the monk was in red dress, lest their master see any other colour and his eye ache comes back.

Hearing this the monk laughed and said "If only you had just got a pair of green spectacles, you could have saved these walls, trees and pots and all other articles from this unwarranted change. You cannot paint the world green."

Let us change our vision and the world will appear accordingly. It is easier to protect your feet with slippers than to carpet the whole earth. Just change your vision and stay blessed forever!

(Compiled by Dr. Veena Adige)

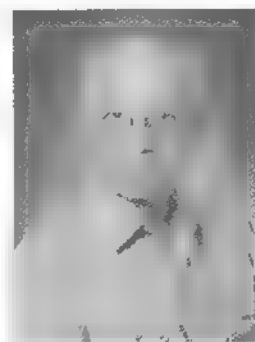
Reader.com

Expressing Thanks

Thank you very much for accommodating my article on Dr. Valiathan in the February 1-15 issue of *Bhavan's Journal*. It was gratifying to see the Shraddhanjali on Dr. R. Chidambaram appear along with it.

—Dr. T. S. Muraleedharan,
Kerala

Beautiful Article



While skimming through the contents of *Bhavan's Journal*, the article on Padma Vibhushan winner Dr. Valiathan instantly caught my attention and I read it in a single stretch. Thanks to *BJ* and Dr. Muraleedharan for bringing this

beautiful article to the readers about such an inspiring personality who was always capable of creating a heaven around him no matter how varied the areas of his research may be.

—N. K. Balakrishnan,
Guruvayur

Inspirational Value

I read the article on Dr. Valiathan (*BJ* dated February 1-15, 2025). Although I had heard about him and knew him to be a renowned thoracic surgeon, I was not aware of his major contributions to Ayurveda and other academic fields. I think this is true of the majority of people. I am convinced that the article is truly worthy of reading, besides being both informative and highly useful for professional and research scholars in the fields of both allopathy and Ayurveda. There is no doubt that Dr. Muraleedharan had carried out an in-depth study on the

subject and he shared the details in a very effective manner. He meticulously covered all the six phases in the professional life of Dr. Valiathan. It is very surprising that he carried out the *gurukula* system of education for three years when he was 65 years of age whereas his guru, Shri. Raghavan Thirumulpad, is 80 years old.

I would like to extend my hearty congratulations to Dr. Muraleedharan for this outstanding work.

—Sethumadhavan, Kerala

Visionary Leader

Thank you so much for taking the time to provide feedback on my article about Ratan Tata in *Bhavan's Journal*. I particularly appreciated the quote from Peter Drucker, which resonated deeply with me and perfectly encapsulates the spirit of the late Ratan Tata.

As rightly pointed out, he was a visionary leader who worked tirelessly to create a better future and strove to turn his ideals into reality.

—Prema Raghavan, Baroda

A Cool Tradition

I had a unique experience today at the Bhavan's school that I thought of sharing here. The school has been

having the tradition of Aashirwad day for those who are studying for their Std. 12 board exams. This 'Aashirwad' is jointly done by the parents and teachers of the respective classes, with a memento from the Principal. The objective of this tradition is to wish and bless the students for the next stages of their career and life. I found the tradition quite interesting and I appreciate the initiative and efforts of the Bhavan's school.

—A message from a parent, Sajeew Warriar, on the farewell meeting of his daughter who is a Std. 12 student of Bhavan's Rajaji Vidyashram in Chennai

Family Time



This is with reference to the article 'Decline in Family Time' (BJ dated January 16-31

2025). Although a very short write-up, it conveys a powerful message. Every individual works for himself and his family with the future in mind. In reality, the future lies not in what we earn but on what we spend, that is

time, particularly time spent with our loved ones including pets. Money spent can be earned back, but once we fail to spend joyful time with our family, it is a perpetual loss.

—Rajiv Magal, Karnataka

Homage to Dr Manmohan Singh



financial management. Perhaps Dr. Singh was inspired by the words of Jawaharlal Nehru: "Success often comes to those who dare and act. It seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play for high stakes; and if we seek to achieve great things, it can only be through great dangers." In all probability, taking a cue from the said words of Nehru, he built a strong financial sector by reforming the Indian economy.

This is with reference to the article written as a homage to the late Dr. Manmohan Singh (BJ dated February 1-15, 2025). He was a seasoned and upright economist, an unassuming and competent administrator, and a financial wizard. He had shown that the country needed professionals of his calibre to make a difference in

In my view, he fully deserves no better tribute than what William Shakespeare wrote: "His life was gentle, and the elements so mixed in him that all nature might stand up and say to the world, 'This was a man.'"

May his noble soul rest in eternal peace!

—Kelath Gopakumar Menon, Thrissur

SWADHYAYA
Valmiki Ramayana

(Uttarakanda, Canto 98)



ततस्त्रिभिर्होरात्रैः सम्प्राप्य मधुरामथ ।
शत्रुघ्नाय यथावृत्तमाचरुयुः सर्वमेव तत् ॥२॥

*tatastribhirahoraatraih sampraapya madhuraamatha
shatrughnaaya yathaavrittamaachakhyuh sarvameva tat.*

Then after three days and nights, they reached Madhura. They (the messengers) narrated everything to Shatrughna.

लक्ष्मणस्य परित्यागं प्रतिज्ञां राघवस्य च ।
पुत्रयोरभिषेकं च पौरानुगमनं तथा ॥३॥

*lakshmanasya parityaagam pratijnaam raaghavasya cha
putrayorabhishekam cha pauraanugamanam tatha.*

They (the messengers) reported to Shatrughna about the desertion of Lakshmana, the determination of Ramachandra, the descendant of Raghu, the coronation of his two sons and the citizens following them.

कुशस्य नगरी रम्या विन्ध्यपर्वतरोधसि ।
कुशावतीति नाम्ना सा कृता रामेण धीमता ॥४॥

*kushasya nagaree ramyaa vindhyaparvatarodhasi
kushaavateeti naamnaa saa kritaa raamena dheemataa.*

That beautiful city of Kusha was situated at the foot of the Vindhya mountain. The wise Ramachandra named it Kushavati.

श्राविता च पुरी रम्या श्रावस्तीति लवस्य च ।
अयोध्यां विजनां चैव भरतं राघवानुगम् ॥५॥

*shraavitaa cha puree ramyaa shraavasteeti lavasya cha
ayodhyaam vijanaam chaiva bharatam raaghavaanugam.*

Shravasti, the beautiful city of Lava, was also made famous. The messengers also spoke about the desertion of Ayodhya, and Bharata's decision of following Ramachandra to heaven.



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Kolkata Kendra

Gymnastics Star of BGKV

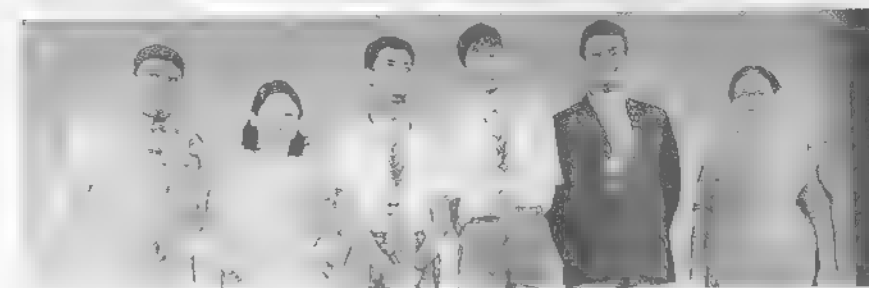
Sunishka Dutta of Std. 7 of *Bhavan's Gangabux Kanoria Vidyamandir (BGKV)*, Kolkata, has made her school proud again by securing the 1st position in the 'vault' and 'beam' category in the 68th State School Games 2024 - Gymnastics. She has also secured the 4th position in the 'floor' category and an all-round 3rd position. This event was held at Salt Lake, Kolkata, on November 16, 2024. She has been selected for SGFI 2024.



CBSE Heritage India Quiz

The CBSE Heritage India Quiz was held on November 18, 2024, at Hariyana Vidya Mandir, Salt Lake, Kolkata. Many renowned schools

across West Bengal participated in this contest. BGKV was one of the six schools to reach the finals after scoring the highest in the



preliminary round. In the final round, BGKV stood second after DAV Model School, Durgapur. The

participants were Anandaroop Ghosh (Std. 11), Rudradev Datta (Std. 10) and Pathikrit Maitra (Std. 10).

Red Ribbon Quiz Competition

The West Bengal State AIDS Prevention and Control Society, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of West Bengal, organised the prestigious Red Ribbon State Level Quiz Competition on November 22, 2024, which was held at Swasthya Bhawan. Team BGKV secured the second position in the quiz. The participants, Arjya Sarkar (Std. 11) and Rishi Singh (Std. 11) received certificates and a cash prize of Rs. 4000.



SIP Abacus International Prodigy 2024



Adrit Chakraborty of Std. 7 participated in 'SIP Abacus International Prodigy 2024' held at Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan, Kolkata, on November 10, 2024. He became the National and International Champion of Grand Module B level by defeating 11 countries (India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, UAE, Bahrain, Philippines, Tanzania, New Zealand, Australia and USA).

Chess Tournament



Venkatesh Das of Std. 8 secured the 30th rank (main group) in the '1st Pro Skillcraft International Open Classical FIDE Rated Chess Tournament' which

was held from November 16 to 20, 2024, at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi. He was awarded a cash prize and a medal.

Hyderabad Kendra

Bhavan's Atmakuri Rama Rao School

Mock Fire Drill

The school organised the fire safety awareness programme on October 1, 2024, to educate students on the importance of fire safety measures. A comprehensive PPT on types of extinguishers and safety measures were shown. Under the supervision of Station Fire Officer Shri P. Sai Reddy and firemen, a mock fire drill was organised simulating an emergency situation, and fire extinguishers were operated for various

flammable materials like wood, petrol, kerosene, etc.

Educational Tour

An Educational trip to Bengaluru and Mysore from October 2 to 5, 2024, offered a holistic educational experience to 101 students of Std. 8. Ten teachers accompanied the students. They visited Bengaluru, Mysore, Philomena Church, Science Museum, Tipu Sultan's Summer Palace and Nandi Temple. The tour concluded with students reflecting on their enriching experience and lasting memories.

Delhi Tour

As many as 103 students from Std. 9 and 11, accompanied by 10 teachers, were taken on an educational tour to Taj Mahal, the Wagah Border, Qutub Minar, Agra Fort, Science Museum, the Golden Temple and a few places in the north from October 8 to 14, 2024. It was a memorable journey owing to the inspiration and learning that it brought forth.

Community Insights

On October 25, 2024, students of Std. 7 visited Joy Foundation Society, an Old Age Home in Madhapur. This community service initiative inspired the students to give their best performance. The students presented a cultural programme comprising dance and songs. They shared their refreshments and also assisted them in making Diwali Greeting Cards. They also organised games and entertained the old people. By the end of the day, they had shared an emotional bond with the people of the old age home.

Students also visited Government Primary School, Masthan Nagar, and distributed stationery and food material there. The visit aimed to inspire young students to 'give back to society'.

Scholars Badge Day

Scholars Badge Day was held on October 24, 2024, in the school premises. Mr. Ganesh Reddy, proprietor of Green Geo, gave away prizes to the winners of various Inter-school and Inter-house Competitions, recognising their exceptional achievements in sports and other extra curricular activities.

Fun with Science

The tiny tots enthusiastically took part in the 'Fun with Science' activities, observing their teachers blow air in balloons, flying kites, blowing paper balls, filling air in polythene bags. These activities helped students understand the concept of 'Air', which was conveyed using a practical approach.

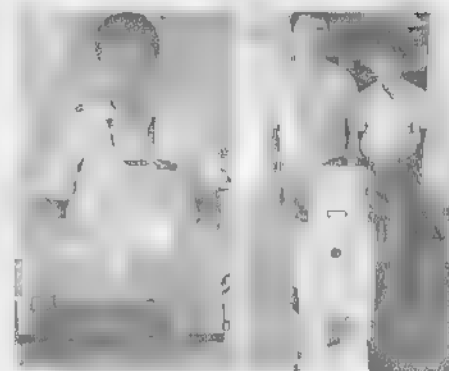
Musical Programme

In order to support the visually challenged, the school organised a Musical programme on October 25, 2024, in the school premises. Singers from TEZAS Foundation for Disabled entertained the young audience. The audience, comprising of students from Pre-primary class to Std. 12, were quite cheerful and they encouraged the gifted artistes.

Jaipur Kendra

The STEAM Innovation Challenge

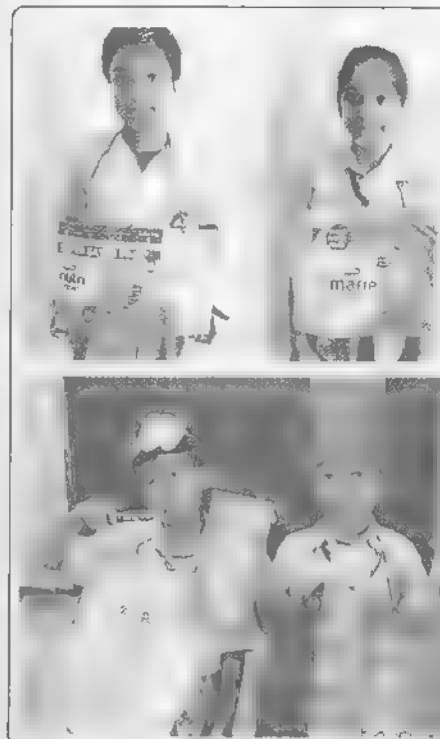
The STEAM Innovation Challenge was successfully held on October 4, 2024, for students of Std. 6 to 8. This event served as an excellent platform for students to apply their knowledge of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) to develop innovative real-world solutions. Each participating team showcased their creative projects, which were evaluated by Judges based on



creativity, practical application, and overall presentation.

Ad O Mania

'Ad O Mania' was a fun and engaging activity that allowed the students of Std. 4 to express their creativity, work collaboratively, and develop public speaking skills. The advertisements created were impressive and the presentations showcased their confidence and enthusiasm. Students used humour and story-telling techniques with slogans and catchy phrases to grab the attention of the audience. The activity was a versatile tool for diverse learning styles.



Poetry Recitation Activity



An Intersection Group Poetry Recitation Activity was organised for the students of Std. 2 with the aim of encouraging them to develop their public speaking skills, creativity and appreciation

for poetry. The theme of the Recitation Activity was Patriotism. The students enthralled the audience with their articulation and memory skills while reciting the poems.

Working Model of Lungs



With the aim of helping students understand the structure and functioning of human lungs through a hands-on model-making exercise, Working Model of Lungs activity was conducted for the students of Std. 2. The activity encouraged collaborative learning and enhanced students' creativity

and critical thinking skills. They found it engaging and informative. The visual and interactive approach made learning enjoyable and memorable.

The Hindi Fortnight 'Expression'

In commemoration of Hindi Pakhwada 'Expression', various activities were organised for the students from Std. 1 to 4. The objective of the activities was to develop the interest of students in the Hindi language as well as to develop their language skills and self-confidence, and promote team work. Activities like poem



recitation, Wings of Imagination (My Ideal Character), Story-telling (based on moral values) and impromptu speech were

conducted. The activities helped students develop essential communication skills, preparing them for future interactions.

Painting Competition

The school exhibited outstanding performance at the National/ State/ School level painting competition organised by ICCW. Approximately 800 students from Std. 1 to 12 showcased their artistic talents, making the event a grand success.



State-Level Laurels:

Kritika Shukla of Std. 11 secured the prestigious third position and received the Bronze Medal and a cash prize of Rs. 500.

School-Level Laurels:

◆ Gold Medal - Kashi Sharma (Std.

3) and Bhumi Sharma (Std. 5)

◆ Silver Medal - Aahana (Std. 4) and Vatsala Kathuria (Std. 5)

◆ Bronze Medal - Vanshika Jain (Std. 3) and Shanaya Sobti (Std. 9)

Talent Show

To provide a platform for students to showcase their diverse talents, a talent show was organised for the students of Std 4 and 5. The students enthusiastically showcased their skills in magic shows, dance



(various styles), vocal performances (songs, poems, *bhajans*), instrumental music performances and yoga. The activity successfully showcased the students' hidden talents, nurtured their creativity, and instilled a sense of pride and achievement in them

Diwali Celebration

The students celebrated Diwali, the festival of lights, with great enthusiasm and fervour. They cleaned their classrooms to welcome Goddess Lakshmi and worship Goddess Saraswati. The students of Std. 1 and 2 participated in a vibrant and engaging Ramayana role play session, diya decoration and Rangoli making. Students of Std. 3 crafted beautiful D'wali cards for their friends and family, Std. 4 students showcased



their artistic skills by creating stunning Diwali lanterns, Std. 5 students demonstrated their creativity through intricate Paglya art and Rangoli designs. The activities encouraged

bonding and fostered teamwork among students.

The innovative Rangoli designs and colourful diyas and lanterns added to the festive atmosphere adorning the school corridors.

National Painting Competition

Anushka Bhala, a student of Std. 4, won the prestigious First Prize in the National Painting Competition conducted by the Indian Council for

Child Welfare. Her dedication and passion for art have earned her this well-deserved recognition, inspiring other students to strive for excellence.

Achievements and Accolades in Sports and Games

Football Girls organised by SGFI, District Level Gold Medal (Std. 9 – 12): 1. Shreja Gautam, 2. Ipshita Kulhari, 3. Khushi Dugar, 4. Maisha Jain, 5. Aira Kapoor, 6. Aarvi Sharma, 7. Kashika Jain, 8. Vridhi Batra, 9. Kanika Jain 10. Radhani Lahoty, 11. Elisha Jhanwar 12. Charvi Khandelwal, 13. Pooja Swami, 14. Mahi Meghaney, 15. Tejasvi Choudhary, 16. Muskan Meena 17. Urvi Kakkar 18. Drishti Kaur

Football Girls organised by SGFI, District Level Gold Medal (Std. 6 – 8): 1. Samaira K Kankariya 2. Mishti Sharma, 3. Dhruvi Sharma, 4. Deevija Gogoi, 5. Diva Gupta, 6. Somya Sain, 7. Saina, 8. Manasvi Singh, 9. Suddhi Agarwal, 10. Riya Agarwal, 11. Ananya Gupta, 12. Aadrika Naruka, 14. Gargi Sisodiya, 15. Risha,

16. Nandini Tripathi, 17. Himanshi Sonkhiya, 18. Vedanshi Sharma

Archery Girls organised by SGFI, District Bronze Medal: Preksha Singh

Chess Girls organised by SGFI, District Level: Gold Medal: Vedika Pal

Table Tennis organised by SGFI, District Level: Silver Medal and State Level: Silver Medal: Saumya Jain

District (Gold): Tushar Ramchandani, Natives Yadav, Samridhi Bagra, Yuvan Bakiwala (Individual-Silver) District-Gold: Tushar Ramchandani

District (Bronze), States (Bronze): Naitik Veer Yadav

Lawn tennis organised by SGFI, District (Silver): Naisha Chillar; States (Gold): Ashwin Chiller

Karate organised by SGFI, District (Gold): Geetansh Doshi

District (Bronze): Vaishnavi Gupta

District (Bronze): Ritvi Sharma

District (Gold), State (Bronze):

Bhavik Goyal

Badminton organised by SGFI, District (Gold & Silver), State (2 Silver): Gunika Baid; District (2 Bronze): Shourya Choudhary

Yoga organised by SGFI, District (Gold): Unnati Singh

District (Silver): Tejas Sharma

District (Bronze): Ajay Raj Singh

Swimming organised by SGFI, District (11 Gold): Hriday Bhojwani, Divit Sharma, Risheek Sharma and Serena Agarwal

Swimming organised by SGFI, State (27 Gold, 3 Silver and Over all Championships): Krishnaditya Singh, Sahil Gupta, Gaurang Modi, Gagan Meena, Prakhar Sharma, Tanish Bhargwani, Praniti Singh, Navya Olaniya and Dakshina Joshi

Swimming: 50th Jr. National, State (Gold): Dakshina Joshi

Swimming: 40th Sub-junior National, Sr. State: 29 Gold, 08 Silver, 06 Bronze.

Sub-junior: 42 Gold, 26 Silver, 06 Bronze

Sub-junior and Junior: 19 Gold 14 Silver 01 Bronze

Shooting organised by RSF, State (Silver & 2 Bronze): Tanishi Choudhary

Kochi Kendra

Navaratri Celebrations

Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Erloor, celebrated 'Shodasha Mantra Geetham' as part of its Navratri festivities on October 9, 2024, at

Sardar Patel Sabha Griha. The event saw active participation from around 150 students, who showcased their talents in music



and dance, making it a vibrant and colourful celebration.

A soulful classical music performance by the students enthralled the audience, blending cultural heritage with devotion.

The highlight of the celebration was a mesmerising dance drama

performed by the students, which beautifully depicted the life of Lord Krishna, from his divine birth to the captivating tale of Rukmini Swayamvaram. The performance was greatly appreciated for its artistic excellence and spiritual depth.

Kerala Piravi Celebrations

Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Erloor, commemorated Kerala Piravi on November 1, 2024, with an array of cultural events celebrating the state's heritage. The event was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, Shri Rajeev Aalunkal, a renowned poet and lyricist, who shared insightful thoughts on Kerala's artistic contributions.

The Kerala Day (Kerala Piravi) featured captivating performances by the students, including a dance presentation and a group song, which showcased pride in Kerala's traditions. Adding to the excitement, Kozhikode Sreenivasan and his team performed the temple art form 'Theyyavum Thottam Pattum', enthralling the audience



with their dynamic expressions, rhythmic movements and vibrant costumes, giving the young ones a

chance to experience the traditional art form of northern Kerala.

Annual Sports Meet

The 36th Annual Sports Meet was held on October 1, 2024, on the school premises.

The programme commenced with the March past led by the School Council and the Captains and Vice Captains of eight houses. Shri Arunjith S, International Athlete, the Chief Guest of the day, hoisted the school flag and declared the Meet open.

Senior Sports Captain, Master Advait Ramavarma administered the oath to the office-bearers. The Chief Guest, in his inaugural

address, highlighted the importance of sports and how it enables students to develop a positive attitude and the capacity to face victory and defeat in good spirit. To add splendour and grandeur, children laid out an array of programmes. Students from the secondary section participated in the aerobic display. This was followed by Yoga display by students of Std. 1 to 5.

The students took part in various sports events with great enthusiasm.



Theyyam Performance

A captivating Theyyam performance was hosted by Bhavan's Munshi Vidyashram in connection with the Kerala Piravi Celebration on November 1, 2024. Kozhikode Sreenivasan, along with his troupe of skilled artists from Parambarya Theyyam Kalasamithi in Kozhikode, presented a mesmerising Theyyam performance which showcased the profound cultural richness and deep-rooted traditions of Kerala. The event was a celebration of the region's vibrant folk heritage, drawing in students, parents, and faculty members who were eager to witness this unique



art form. The event featured the performances of *Bhagavathi* and *Bhairavan*, two significant and revered forms in Theyyam.

Gandhi Jayanti

Students and teachers of Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Erour, actively participated in several events organised in connection with Gandhi Jayanti. They enthusiastically took part in a Kids' Run, a march, and a cleanliness drive. Bhavan's Kids' Run was organised by the

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) to raise awareness on the importance of cleanliness and environmental protection, thereby reaching out to the community. Under the inspiring slogan, 'Let's run together for a cleaner tomorrow', students from LKG to Grade 12 joined in.



Additionally, Guides, NCC members, students, and teachers actively participated in the walkathon organised by the Pedestrian Facilitation Council (TPFC). The objective of the event was to raise awareness about pedestrian safety and the importance of safe walkways. Following this, students

and teachers joined in a cleanliness drive covering the pathway from Palace High School to the Vadakkekotta Metro Station.

As part of the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations, the school also undertook a clean-up drive within the campus involving teachers and students.

Pathanamthitta Kendra

Annual Sports Day

Bhavan's Vidya Mandir Pathanamthitta Kendra celebrated its annual Sports Day on October 30, 2024, at Kodumon Stadium, marking a significant day for the school. Esteemed guest Sri K T Chacko, former Police Superintendent, Inaugurated the event amidst great fanfare. Students from various age groups showcased their skills and teamwork in track and field events, generating palpable excitement as the crowd cheered on for their



favourite teams. The event highlighted the school's commitment to nurturing talent and physical fitness, culminating in Hon Secretary Sri P I Sherief Mohammad awarding prizes to the deserving winners, encouraging them to strive for excellence.

Guest Lecture on Sustainable Technology

Bhavan's Vidya Mandir Pathanamthitta hosted a captivating guest lecture by Dr. Nattuvally Jayachandran, a pioneer in sustainable technology and founder of the Jayachandran

group of clinics, on November 6, 2024. Dr. Jayachandran, a renowned physician who is an expert in Keraliya Panchakarma with a special focus on diabetes and arthritis, emphasised the



importance of embracing sustainable practices in daily life.

As a token of appreciation, talented student authors Ankita Ajay (Std. 10), Aalia Dipu (Std. 8)

and Keerthana S. Iyer (Std. 8) presented their books as mementos to Dr. Jayachandran, showcasing the school's nurturing of young literary talent.

National Education Day

November 11, 2024, marked a significant day at Bhavan's Vidya Mandir Pathanamthitta as the English Department proudly celebrated National Education Day, commemorating the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India's first Education Minister. The celebration showcased the talents of students across various disciplines, featuring soulful songs by students of Std. 10, 4 and 6, thought-provoking poems recited by Std. 9 students, Disney characters coming alive in the engaging skit put up by Std. 7 students, book reviews by Std. 9 students, an enchanting 'Barbie' dance by Std. 2 students, and an energetic dance performance

by Std. 8 students. Prizes were distributed to outstanding students, recognising their excellence in various disciplines.

Children's Day



November 14, 2024, Children's Day, was a vibrant celebration at Bhavan's Vidya Mandir Pathanamthitta, commemorating Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's birthday and reaffirming the school's commitment to nurturing young minds. The festivities began with a peaceful children's rally, where students of Std. 1 and 2 held placards

and chanted 'Jai Jai Chachaji...' as a tribute to Nehru. A stunning fashion show followed, showcasing traditional costumes from various Indian states, highlighting the country's rich cultural diversity. Std.

Magic Show



Renowned magician C R Bose mesmerised the audience with his magical skills at the *Onnayi Pujiyathilekku* Magic Show held at BVM on November 21, 2024. The event, guided by Health Inspector Mr. Gopakumar, aimed to create awareness about AIDS and promote healthy habits among students. The unique blend of magic and education inspired a positive change and promoted awareness about the importance of healthy habits.

8 students presented an engaging English skit, and the celebration culminated in a mesmerising song-and-dance programme by Std. 3 and 5 students, filling the atmosphere with joy and energy.

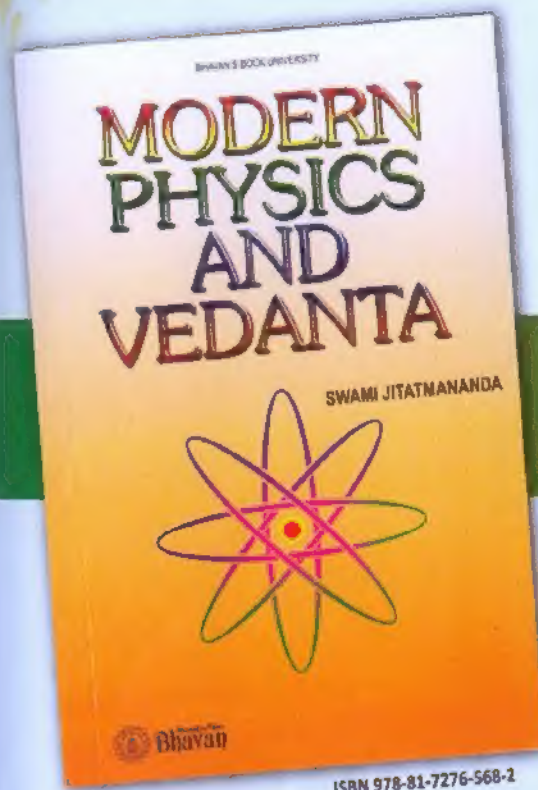
Kerala Formation Day

Bhavan's Vidya Mandir Pathanamthitta's Malayalam Department marked Kerala Piravi on November 1, 2024, with a vibrant celebration. Students took an oath to safeguard their mother tongue, Malayalam, reaffirming their commitment to preserving Kerala's linguistic heritage. The event featured mesmerising cultural performances, including traditional Thiruvathira dance, showcasing the state's iconic art forms and reinforcing the school's dedication to promoting Kerala's cultural diversity and nurturing young minds to appreciate their roots.

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